

# O-BHS 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 5**

**October 1, 2001**

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## **OUR NEXT REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD WEDNESDAY EVENING, OCTOBER 10, 2001, 7 P.M., AT THE POPLAR VILLAGE HALL.**

**For our program, Dr. Richard Sauers, who resides with his family in Lake Nebagamon, a nationally recognized researcher and author of several books on the American Civil War, will talk about researching for ancestors who might have served in that bloody conflict. As curator of the Richard I. Bong World War II Center in Superior, he has also agreed to field questions about that project which we expect will soon be under construction. Thanks to Jerry Bong Fechtelkotter who has secured the hall and who will head up hospitality.**

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**WELCOME ALL!**

**The Brule History Research Group 2002 Calendars are now 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 by mail is \$7.50 which includes postage and handling. Purchased from Brule outlets the calendar is \$6.00.**

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE O-BHS NEWS ARE THOSE OF THE WRITERS ALONE AND ARE NOT INTENDED TO REPRESENT OFFICIAL POSITIONS OF THE O-BHS ORGANIZATION.

## **From the President**

The terrorist assault on the icons of American economic and military power came with full and living horror across our breakfast tables September 11th. Like the assassination of President Kennedy, and Neil Armstrong's first human step on the moon we will remember where we were and what we were doing that day when all history again pivoted in the moment.

How do we honestly and accurately relate our earthy neighborhood and community happenings to these galvanizing mega-media unearthly scenes? How do we know by what is happening immediately around us that the world has changed? Without mass media would we who are over a thousand miles from "ground zero" know that Western Civilization has sustained a direct hit? The media has delivered a gory media event 7,000 victims huge. But what are the hard facts behind the spectacle? Beyond the media we need to sense our place in events, and to know the threat to our own local way of life.

Our local labors are part of the history of the doomed towers. It is likely that we have fed the systems in place

the raw material, the iron, the iron in the battered steel girders still rising many stories above the wreckage. This iron must have been blasted from the earth by our relatives living just to our north. Members of our families worked on the trains and in the railroad yards in Allouez where their mountains of discharged taconite pellets were stored. And the conveyor crossing Second Street in Superior must have carried the future steel in these pellets bound for eastern blast furnaces, floated there on giant ship-barges a thousand feet long by our cousins and brothers. Now that iron, wrapped around pitiful victims from around the world, is being torn apart by the teeth of giant jaws made on our waterfront by our friends. Our direct links with the east are economic, industrial as well as cultural.

After the initial shock subsides honest questions start to rise amidst the wreckage of our own assumptions: Will this process repeat itself? Is it wise to stack these many lives into vulnerable skyscrapers? Is it wise to fill the skies with these many lives in the hands of only mortal pilots and their potential suicidal attackers? These systems among the culmination of our achievement as a society are the destination of many local young people. Can these systems be made safe, or are they mortally and morally flawed? And finally, will we find that the poisoned attitude of the attackers comes from within the dynamics of so-called Western culture itself? What more about the nature of man must we discover or need we be reminded of and respect to find our way into a less threatening future? The troubling questions have just begun.

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

### **DAVIDSON WINDMILL TOURS & BAKE SALE DURING BAYFIELD'S APPLE FESTIVAL WEEKEND, OCTOBER 5th, 6th & 7th.**

At our annual meeting a sign up sheet was passed to gather names of those interested in helping with our first ever scheduled tours of the Davidson Windmill. We also put out a request for donations of baked goods for a bake sale to be held on Saturday, October 6th only. Our schedule includes three shifts running from 9 am to 6 pm each day. Those with baked goods to donate can bring them to the mill on Saturday or to the home of Delores Pellman on Friday afternoon. Please call your president, Jim Pellman, if you would like to have them picked up Friday, or Saturday morning before 9 am.

We are hoping for more tour volunteers, especially on Friday. Shifts are three hours long running from 9 to 12, 12 to 3 and 3 to 6. A mill photograph and post cards will now also be available for sale, to go with the magnets, T-shirts, caps and mugs we ordered earlier. Thanks to those who have promised their time and goodies. Now all we and the Bayfield Apple Festival needs is good warm weather. Forecasts sound the opposite. We will erect a shelter in the event of bad weather. Thanks to Paul Colby who has volunteered to mow the grounds and weed wack behind the security fence. A final preparatory meeting of the Windmill Committee is planned for 7 pm on Wednesday evening, October 3rd, at Delores Pellman's in Maple.

### **Donations of Maple School District Clerk Records from Erland Ukkola**

Member Erland Ukkola is the son of the late William Ukkola who was a long time clerk for the Town of Maple, and Lillian Jokela Ukkola, who for many years was clerk within the Maple School Districts. Fifty years ago this Maple school district was dissolved, along with the districts in seven other communities that joined to form the Joint School District with the formation of the Union Free and later "Northwestern" High School. This joint district eventually became today's District of Maple. The minutes of the proceedings of this Maple district were assumed to have been discarded until Erland recently found some of them among other records in slightly damaged condition saved in the attic of what was once his parent's home. Also among the records are books listing mortgage agreements filed in the early 1930s with the Town of Maple. Erland has entrusted the Old-Brule Heritage Society with these volumes. Other records deal with School District Number 3 which served the Blueberry School until its closure, and Cloverland students attending Maple Corner School. The District Treasurer's records included give a detailed look at the operation of the Maple Districts for much of a twenty year time span beginning about 1930.

Our thanks to Erland who fills a tremendous gap with these materials and to his parents, Bill and Lillian, who placed them like a time capsule in their attic for discovery in our time.

### **Annual Meeting Held at the Maple Pavilion in Chilly Conditions.**

Eighteen hearty souls shared a pot luck lunch and an interesting talk by archaeologist Steve Mulholland of UMD on Saturday, September 15th. Steve gave us a summary view of those early people in the region who hunted big game animals and of course smaller prey after the ice had retreated from the region about 10,000 years ago. He brought along key examples of the pottery shards, copper pieces and lithic (stone) materials found in recent years in the excavations at the Fish Lake Dam Site, north of Duluth, and another interesting example of a rare Folsom point found unexpectedly even further north in Minnesota.

Following his talk a relatively brief annual meeting business session was held. We re-elected to the Board all Board members with expiring terms, except Chuck Zosel who has found himself overextended. In place of Chuck we elected long time Board alternate, Eddy Walman, to a two year term. Others reelected were Larry Luostari, Jim Pellman, Marvin Haukkala, Jerry Fechtelkotter and Alice Christensen. We discussed the coming activities at the Davidson Windmill during the Bayfield Apple Festival weekend and made plans for tours and a bake sale for that weekend which will run from October 5th to 7th.

A scheduled meeting of the board for election of officers was postponed until our next meeting until the board could be more fully represented. We have reluctantly accepted the decision of our Second Vice President, Chuck Zosel, not to seek a second term on the Board. We all thank him for the indispensable services he has rendered our group over the past three years, and wish him, and his enterprises the very best.

A warm thank you to all of you who attended and brought food to share. A thank you also to Steve Mulholland who asked that his \$25 honorarium be donated back to our group.

### **August 8th Bimonthly Meeting Held in Cloverland.**

Cloverland Town Hall was the site of our August meeting. For our program, Barry Hanson of Brule (Maple Post Office), gave us a talk on the Kensington Runestone. To summarize the profile given in our last issue, Barry just happens to be coordinator of the ongoing project investigating the evidence for the authenticity of the Kensington Runestone. Barry's research activities on the Kensington Runestone were featured in an article which appeared in the Summer 2001 issue of *The Bridge*, a publication for alumni of the University of Minnesota, Duluth. To help determine the date of the stone, Barry, acting for Runestone Foundation, had engaged the expertise of UMD alumnus Scott Wolter of American Petrographic Services of St. Paul, Minnesota, and independently, Paul Weiblen a retired U of M geology professor. Wolter in turn engaged a prestigious crew including former UMD geology department professors Charlie Matsch, John Green, and Richard Ojakangas, Ken Harris of the Minnesota Geological Survey, Minnesota geology professor Robert Johnson, and stone carver Janey Westin.

This tombstone-like historical artifact is better known to the school children of Minnesota since it was found within Minnesota's western state boundary. If authentic, however, it has significance far beyond Minnesota, and speaks to the record of the boldness of the exploits of the Vikings while in this hemisphere. The many in our region with Scandinavian heritage would be able to add this to the record of their forebears.

The runic text reads in translation: "8 Goths (Swedes) and 22 Norwegians on a voyage of discovery from Vinland (of) the West. We had a camp by 2 skerries one day journey north from this stone. We were out fishing one day. After we came home we found 10 men red with blood and dead. AVM (Ave Virgin Mary) save (us) from evil. (We) have 10 men of (ours) by the sea to look after our ships 14 day journeys north from this island. Year 1362."

The 200 pound graywacke stone slab is alleged to have been discovered by a Scandinavian immigrant farmer, Olof Ohman, in 1898 (with witnesses). It now rests in the Runestone Museum in Alexandria, Minnesota. Barry gave us an interesting and wide-ranging talk with overhead projected images. His evidence was extremely convincing, and some of the stemmed axes that have turned up in that same part of southwestern

Minnesota are particularly intriguing. Similar axes have been found in the Åhland Islands area of modern Finland. We look forward to the 600 page book he is working on, due out this fall.

We had received contact from Editor, Hugh Bishop, of *Lake Superior Magazine*, who promised an update article in late summer on the Davidson Windmill. That article had been published and a copy of the magazine was circulated. The president was encouraged to write a letter of thanks to Hugh.

The executive committee and windmill committee were charged with arrangements for the annual meeting and the windmill tours in early October.

Thanks to Larry Luostari for arrangements at the Cloverland Town Hall, to Delores Pellman, Larry and Pat to Marge Koskie who provided hospitality for the evening. Miss anyone? Thanks also, to Barry.



### **Northwestern Regional Convention of the Wisconsin Council for Local History Hosted by the Moquah Heritage Society.**

On Saturday, August 25th, Jackie Plunkett, Delores Pellman, Irene Parenteau and Jim Pellman traveled to Ashland to the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center (NGLVS) and also to the Pilsen Town Hall in Moquah for the annual Northwestern Regional Convention. The meeting was hosted by the Moquah Heritage Society, Inc.

This group was formed in 1987 with goals very similar to those of the O-BHS. The Moquah Society does not have a museum and has held meetings in private homes. It was founded to preserve the ethnic heritage and history of the early farm settlers of Moquah. Moquah means “bear” in Chippewa. The group started with twelve charter members and has grown to over 340 members. Their main vehicle is their quarterly newsletter called *The Ethnic Voice*, and they have held group Slovak language studies from the start. In the afternoon, Richard Mihalek, President of the Bayfield County Historical Society, gave a slide talk on Slovak immigration into Moquah.

Unfortunately Norma Lind was prevented from joining us by health problems. We wish her a full and speedy recovery. Our thanks to the Moquah society and to the staff at the NGLVS for their warm hospitality.

#### **VCR TAPES AVAILABLE**

We would like to again remind everyone that the tape we ordered from CSPAN on the life of President Calvin Coolidge is available to check out for use.

We also now have available from the opposite end of the political spectrum the tape “For the Common Good: The History of the *Työmies* Newspaper.” This tape is close to ninety minutes long, and was presented to the O-BHS by Douglas County Historical Society. It is the creative work of T. Selinski Productions and was copyrighted in 2000. It was presented to viewers recently on public television in Duluth. Please see or call Jim Pellman (363-2453) to check out either tape.

### **Arnold Perala Donates Numerous Items before the Annual Meeting**

Arnold Perala provided the Society with numerous paper items, among which was a rare photograph of the family of the first pastor of the Faith Lutheran Church in Maple, Rev. Kivi, found among the effects of Martha Anttila Ketola.. Other items included old and new newspaper clippings dealing with local events and personalities. Among these was an article on the late Anna “Alina” Carvela Nyy written by Lisa Hanft which appeared in the *Superior Evening Telegram* on June 3, 1996, at the time of Alina’s 99th birthday. Thank you Arnold and Ketola family

### Fundraising Merchandise for Sale

The Society now has available regional history magnets, plus Davidson Windmill memorabilia: mugs, caps and tee shirts for sale. Magnets are going for \$1 each or 6 for \$5.00, proceeds to our general fund. The Windmill mugs are \$8.00, caps, \$9.00 and tee shirts, any size, \$10, all proceeds going into the Windmill Fund.

We also now have copies of a David Noah Seis photograph of the mill for sale. These are in three sizes: 4 by 5 inches, 5 by 7 inches, and 8 1/2 by 11 inches. The smaller reproductions can also be used as post cards as each has a brief historical description on half of its reverse side. Prices have yet to be firmly decided upon, but the smallest images should go for under \$1.00 each, the middle size for under \$2.00 and the largest one which has no printing on it for \$3.00 or so. All are laser reproductions on card stock suitable for framing.

Wisconsin tax is included in all prices. Shipping and handling are \$4.00 for the first item and 50 cents each for each additional item. Please contact us in advance if you want any items shipped. All items will be available for purchase at our meetings, or by contacting your President at 363-2453.

### Area History: No. 20

#### Karelian Fever

Last April Mayme Corgan Sevander gave our group an interesting presentation of her research on the phenomenon known as “Karelian Fever.” She spoke from first hand experience being a child old enough at the time of her family’s move from New York to retain memories of their passage to the “workers’ paradise.” In her talk and her book, *They Took My Father*, she relates her attempts to find out from Soviet authorities the truth about what happened to her father during those perilous times. She relates how she was away at school when a letter came from her mother describing how her father was taken away, November 4, 1937, under arrest, and the poignant image of his neighbor, Mr. Kiuru, one of the men taking him, advising his father to leave behind his gold watch, to take instead the old stainless steel wrist watch of his son. For Mayme, this was the last reliable information she had about her father, and even this was second hand coming from her mother. Her inquiries to the Soviet government later produced different versions of his fate. At fourteen she had met with members of the NKVD and with the “military tribunal,” each with a different story of Corgan’s sentence and place of sentence. After Khrushchev assumed power Mayme received a report on her father’s death that indicated he had died in 1940 of cancer. In 1985 came Gorbachev’s presidency, and Mayme again wrote for her father’s death certificate. In 1991 the reply came: it reported that Oscar Corgan had been arrested on November 4, 1937 and that he had been executed on January 8, 1938. It seems that to the best of her ability Mayme has reported to us the facts she has been able to uncover.

What really happened to her father? Can the vaults of the former Soviet government produce accurate and reliable facts? Dr. Alexis Pogorelskin, head of the Department of History at UMD has doubts about Mayme’s facts. She has documents that show that old friends in Cloquet received urgent requests from Oscar Corgan for money to permit him to return to the United States. V. S. Alanne in 1951, writing in *A Story of Cooperative Training* chillingly states in his summary biography about Oscar Corgan: “[A]fter the first purges [Corgan] fled to Latvia where he was last heard from in the summer of 1939 when he sent urgent appeals for money.....[He] was not successful with these appeals, and evidently perished later, as nothing has been heard from his since.”

We do not know who to believe. Will these letters proving these appeals ever surface? Will we ever find out how Oscar Corgan made it to Latvia? and what he might have had to do to protect his family if Mayme’s glowing portrait of him is accurate? Will we be able to ever trust the Soviet record? Could someone have lied to save Corgan, documenting an execution that never took place, at least not at the time indicated?

These questions beg for answers, and great caution in dealing with any of the sources. But this case is incredibly interesting for it helps us see how easily we can become victims of the very causes we hold dear. We will look more closely at these issues again.

*Thanks to both Mayme Corgan Sevander and to Dr. Pogorelskin for their efforts at uncovering the truth. In the end the Truth will stand on its own strength. It might be even more fascinating where it may yet take us. Editor.*

**Calendar:**

**October 3**, Wednesday, 7 PM

O-BHS Davidson Windmill Committee meets at Delores Pellman's to plan tours for Oct. 5 to 7.

**October 5, 6 and 7**, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 9 AM to 6 PM. Bayfield Apple Festival Weekend.

Tours at the Davidson Windmill. Bake Sale Saturday at the mill (Donation pickup Friday evening or Saturday morning. Call 363-2453.).

**October 10**, Wednesday, 7 PM

Regular bimonthly meeting, Poplar Village Hall. Dr. Richard Sauers speaks on Civil War Research.

**November 22**, Thursday, Thanksgiving Day.

**November 23**, Friday, *O-BHS News* deadline.

**December 12**, Wednesday, our next regular bimonthly meeting. Place and Program to be announced.

**WEB SITE ON LINE**

Again a reminder that computer volunteer, **Mr. Dave Short** of Poplar, has designed our web site and has kept it running. It's web address remains for now <http://discover-net.net/~dshort/> . Check it out! **Donna Bergsten** has been working on site changes which will lead eventually to a changed address and to our own independent site.

**Thanks Dave, Audrey, Jackie & Donna.**

**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.**

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