

OBHS News

Volume IV, Issue 6

December 3, 2002

Newsletter of the Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. ©2002
Founded in 1998 to Preserve and Share the Heritage of the Old-Brule Region.

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NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM WED., DEC. 11, 2002, 5:00 PM, AT AMNICON TOWN HALL

OUR CHRISTMAS MEETING, PATRICK LABADIE TO PRESENT SLIDE PROGRAM

Jack Angus, captain of the schooner "Siskiwit," and Alexander McDougall were well known pilots on Lake Superior during the early copper mining days when schooners and sidewheeling steamers were a common site on the big lake. Angus and McDougall later bought land along the Brule River, and for the greater part of McDougall's long life his name was identified with events on the upper reaches of our local stream.

According to Albert Marshall, "one of those who came often to note the beauties of the upper Brule was that doughty sea captain and friend of the outdoors, Captain Alexander McDougall." With shipping done for the season, it was his pleasure during the winter months to go on wide ranging explorations of this region. He was living in Bayfield during the winter of 1870-71 when he sought the guide skills of Antoine Dennis. Together the two mushed a dog team to the "spring ponds" on the Brule River and fished through the ice using hooks baited with buckskin. About another winter trip to the Brule the Captain tell this tale: "In the early part of 1873, I went with W. Clow up the Brule River to a trapper's camp. On the way up Clow became played out so I had to help him along with our load and shelter. We fished for about a week on what is now the H. C. Pierce ponds. There we caught eight thousand trout that weighed about four thousand pounds. I think we caught three-quarters of them with a barbless hook and a piece of buckskin for bait. I caught two bushels of fish in an hour. Most of the fish we took out with a dog team to Bayfield trail, then by horse team to Duluth. I made a trip each way every day, over eighteen miles of trail." Word of this fishing paradise would make its way to St. Louis where Henry Clay Pierce would eventually hear about it, leading to his vast purchases along the river by the early 1880s and to a much later visit of a U.S. President in 1928.

The colorful captain left his mark on the Twin Ports as well as on the Old Brule region. Mr. Labadie will share with us his expertise on the maritime chapters. Pat Labadie is currently involved in Great Lakes underwater archaeology after many years as director of the Lake Superior (Canal Park) Maritime Museum and Visitor Center. This, our Christmas meeting, will be held at the Amnicon Town Hall beginning at 5 pm with a pot luck supper. Mr. Labadie, currently a member of the Superior Public Museums Board, will give his slide talk beginning at 6 pm on McDougall, the creator, inventor and builder of the whalebacks which he and his workers constructed mainly in Superior. Our business meeting will follow. We will close the evening with our fund raising gift "exchange." As a reminder, gifts should be in the \$5.00 price range, and those who intend to join in the exchange will be asked to donate \$5.00 in order to claim a package. Gifts should be marked "man" or "woman."



EVERYONE IS WELCOME! PLEASE BRING A GIFT AND A DISH TO SHARE!

From the President:

Deer season has just ended and I am a little behind in getting out our newsletter. For the first time in many years I have joined hunting parties in both northern Minnesota and locally to outwit the elusive prey. My brother-in-law in good humor has taken to calling me *Bwonna*. I'm not among this class of great hunters, but this does not diminish the enjoyment I feel as I participate in this ancient tradition. I respectfully carry the rifle of my namesake grandfather and hear the correcting voice of my late father often as I test the wind or attempt to figure out which path to take in the

forest— when I'm not forced to move simply to keep from freezing as was the case often this year.

One of the senior members of the Minnesota party called my absence a "sabbatical" capturing what I think is a very important social dimension of the hunt. Deer hunting is a partnership of friends in a drama carried out on an expansive and living stage, on changing and yet fixed grounds, which all members in the party are intimately familiar with. Our frigid Embarrass camp, not far east of the route George Stuntz surveyed from Duluth for early miners and now called

the Vermilion Trail, has been shared by four families since 1961—for forty two years. Every grassy swail and every knob has a name and a story. Despite changes over the years (Big Pine Ridge is now covered with popple saplings and Big Birch Ridge seems to have more balsam fir on it than birch), we all know where the big rock on Twin Buck knob is located. We all know where Judy's Ridge is though she died of a fast spreading cancer fifteen years ago, and where Carl's knob is even though he too is gone and we can't hunt there anymore because it was posted a decade ago.

Somehow we have internalized the characteristics of these locally vast places in terms of people and events. We know these places as we know and knew the people who brought their unique finiteness to them. We feel their presence. We remember them through these places.

In this streaking world where too much of life has become a sabbatical from our moorings it felt good to just sit on a rotting white pine stump, now almost swallowed by new growth, and connect firmly with the young lumber jack, proud in his strength and endurance, who could have no inkling the long overgrown clearing of his labors would come to carry a shameful name like "Cutover."

There is a metaphor somewhere in this on the importance of supporting local history and preserving oral histories. Someone needs to have his or her ear right to the ground to get closer to the honest experience of life.

...and incidentally, my buck will loose his heavy antlers only quite naturally in the coming months.

—Jim Pellman

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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.

REMINDER: TREASURER IS STILL COLLECTING DUES FOR 2003. THANKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

THE KENSINGTON RUNESTONE TOPIC AT OCTOBER MEETING

A recent article in the local paper carried the tired message of a curator of the prestigious Smithsonian Institution that the Kensington Runestone is a fake. This she spoke gently since Scandinavians, she believed, have uncritically embraced the stone as an honest Viking artifact and seem to want to ignore the wiser assessments of relevant experts.

To the contrary, I believe there are many with Scandinavian (and Finnish) heritage who with open eyes and minds are willing to look at the facts, and some of these are also experts in relevant fields. Among these is our neighbor, physical chemist Barry Hanson. If Barry Hanson's evidence is accurate and there seems to be nothing so far to contradict it, the above curator and many of the experts she is relying upon may eventually have to be consoled.

Barry again enlightened us with his talk at our last meeting in October. What if the runestone is an honest

artifact of the Vikings' presence in the heart of North America? What does it mean if a colony of Greenlanders attempted to settle in eastern Minnesota only to disappear culturally and physically? Or did they? Could they have used the Brule-St. Croix route into the interior far ahead of Sieur DuLhut? Is there genetic material to be found in the native American population to trace their presence? And what about those long-shanked iron axes that have been turning up?

I think the type of questions asked about the people of the stone marker will have to shift if Barry's evidence finally holds up. It is evident that this paradigm shift will not come easily as there has been much institutional investment in denying pre-Columbian European contacts. Changing the momentum of these giant vessels with a few stubborn Viking facts should be interesting to watch. Our thanks to Barry for his courage, and for his stimulating work. We congratulate him on his new two volume work.

ARCHIVES/COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE MEETING REGULARLY

The archives room in the Maple Community Center still has some work left, but this has not stopped the Archives/Collection Committee from getting down to a work routine which we hope will some day fill the new space. It is a relief to have many valuable town and regional records and items safely shelved there. Audrey Hakkila, Shirley Kankas, Arnold and Doris Perala, Jim Pellman, Irene Brazill, Delores Pellman and others have been volunteering their time to the Archives/Collection committee work. We welcome other volunteers to help us in this important part of the O-BHS

work. Currently we are inventorying a suitcase full of the William Follis papers. These have been made available to us by members Bill and Jan Follis, and we will be indexing and assessing them, and copying the most essential. Another treasure are copies of financial records of the Northern Cooperative store from Oulu/Iron River given to us by Darrel Alm from Duluth. Our thanks to the Town of Maple and to Chairman Gary Saari for their support and for Gary's many volunteer hours.

FUNDRAISING MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

The Society 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.

A new order of shirts will have a new enlarged design.

Available also are copies of a David Noah Seis photograph of the mill for sale. This improved image comes 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 are \$1.00, \$2.00 and the largest one which has no printing on it \$3.00. All are laser reproductions on card stock suitable for framing. This same improved image is now available in our magnet series. Our thanks to Noah who donated the digital image to O-BHS.

Wisconsin tax is included in all our prices. Shipping and handling for mugs, caps and tee shirts is a \$4.00 minimum. All items will also be available for purchase at our meetings, or by contacting your President at 363-2453.

2003 BRULE HISTORY PHOTO CALENDAR AVAILABLE

The Brule History Research Group organized in 1995 to research, write, and publish the history of Brule. Their annual calendar sales since 1998, when the first one was produced, will be used for the publication of the history.

The 13 photos in the 2003 calendar include summer and winter logging scenes, the Weyandt homestead, students at the Juntti School (1911-1937), a 1939 Waino deer hunting group, fishermen and their day's catch, musicians Ailie and Walter Johnson with a wedding group, Brule River guide John La Rock and his wife Lizzie, among other scenes and sites.

Available from Janet Follis, P. O. Box 114, Brule, WI 54820 (715-372-4948) for the cost of \$7.50 postpaid, or \$6.00 locally from a BHRG member or at Lori's Store. An e-mail address: knmo@baysat.net.

UNAPPROVED MINUTES

Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. Regular Meeting

October 9, 2002, Cloverland Town Hall

Attendance: 18

6:05 P.M. I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Jim Pellman, President, welcomed all who came.

II. **PROGRAM:** Jim introduced Mr. Barry Hanson, author of books and articles about the Kensington Runestone, a relic of the Christian Viking Age (before Columbus, about 1362).

Intermission: Pot luck treats (some left over from the Windmill Bake Sale and Tour) and coffee served by Delores Pellman, with help from Irene Parenteau, Norma Lind, Maryann Gronquist, and Hope Swenson. Our thanks to them all...Forget anyone?

7:40 P.M. III. **BUSINESS MEETING:** Jim opened the meeting by asking for a volunteer to serve as acting secretary. Former Secretary, Hope Swenson accepted the job.

A. **MINUTES:** Last meetings minutes were printed in the last newsletter. Marvin Hakkila moved for approval seconded by Margie Koskie. Motion carried.

B. **FINANCIAL REPORT:** Alice Christensen reported the balances: General Fund checking account: \$1,319; Windmill Fund Savings Account : \$3,676.36. She reported that \$758.80 total came in at the time of the Windmill Tours and Bake Sale. \$175 came in from donations received for the Windmill Tour. The president asked for motion that the proceeds be divided as in the past, 3/4 to the Windmill Fund and 1/4 to the General Fund. Norman LaPole moved we make the division. Irene Parenteau seconded. Motion carried. Marvin Hakkila moved we accept the Treasurer's Report. Delores Pellman seconded the motion. Motion carried. [Hence \$569.10 would go into the Windmill Fund for a total current balance of \$4,245.46 and \$189.70 into the General Fund for a current balance of \$1,508.70.]

C. OLD BUSINESS:

1. **Heritage Park:** No new action taken. Jim re-explained the importance of the site.
2. **Davidson Windmill:**

Apple Festival Weekend Report: Weather did not cooperate at all on Friday with only the Westers of Bennett visiting, but they joined our group that day which made the day a success. Saturday, too, was a success. Jim thanked all those who worked with him to prepare for the tours and bake sale: among those named Paul Colby, Irene Brazill, Larry Luostari, Arnold Perala, Eddy Walman, Jack and Maryann Gronquist for preparation of the building and site, and Larry and Eddy for hauling the Paul Colby trailer back and forth to the site. He wanted to especially acknowledge Julie Gronquist and George Pleau for supplying their canopy on Saturday and asked the Acting Secretary to write to them with our thanks. He also thanked the Gronquists, Norma Lind, Hope Swenson, Irene Parenteau and Delores Pellman for handling sales of goods and Alice Christensen for expanding our inventory and for contacting the insurance company with the good news that our tours into the building would be permitted. Jim gave many, many thanks to all of those unnamed who donated baked goods to this successful event.

Jim also announced that Enbridge (the old Lakehead) had joined with a business membership of \$50, plus a \$50 cash donation to the Windmill site, and also donated all the paint needed for the Windmill site. Paul thought the value of this might be as much as \$400 total. Jim asked that Paul have this be put in writing to properly acknowledge the company, allowing them to take a tax deduction.

The Windmill Committee will meet November 13 at 7 p.m. at the Norman LaPole residence. The Eskolin building committee has been joined with this committee as plans are to move this building to the Windmill site. Bob Aho, Alice Christensen, Paul Marvin Hakkila, Bud LaPole, Jim Pellman, Jackie Plunkett and Eddy Walman are currently members of this committee. Arrangements were to be made to complete the paperwork transferring the Eskolin log cabin from Donald and Julie Anderson to O-BHS. Eddy and Jim would make contact soon.

3. **Archives/Collections Committee:** The file cabinets at Alice Christensen's were scheduled to be moved to the archives Monday, October 14th. The next committee meeting would be held at Delores Pellman's on October 14th at 4 p.m. Audrey Hakkila, Shirley Kankas, and Arnold and Doris Perala, LaVerne LaPole, Irene Brazill and Jim Pellman are members of this committee.

4. **Merchandise for Sale:** Alice C. reported Cathy Carlson's cards which have been added to the inventory have sold very well. "T" shirts have been ordered with a bigger logo and in more requested sizes. Bob Aho needs to be contacted regarding the shirt order. Magnets are available and are at Jim's home. Irene Parenteau moved we renew our supply of magnets, 100 of each color and black and white of the P-38, and Waino church, or 125 if that meets the order better and 50 of the Waino Church. Motion carried.

5. **Volunteer Hours Sheets reminder:** Please fill in regularly for turn in at end of the year. New forms will be passed out.

6. **Brule History Research Group update:** Norma Lind announced that the new Brule History calendars are ready for sale, cost \$6.00.

7. **Douglas County Sesquicentennial (150 years) Planning Committee (Steering Committee meeting):** Public meeting held at Superior Public Library. Norma Lind, Delores and Jim Pellman attended. New committee formed to prepare for our part in the celebration. Hope Swenson, Norman LaPole, Paul Marvin Hakkila, Norma Lind, Maryann Gronquist, and the Westers were named to the committee which may be asked to build exhibits regarding the communities in the Old-Brule region, including a parade float.

8. **Grantsburg Convention Report:** Alice Christensen reported on the events at the annual NW Regional Convention of Local Historical Societies held this year in Grantsburg. Her first trip, she thought it a wonderful experience. Minerva Johnson, Audrey Hakkila and Eddy Walman also represented Old-Brule and reported.

9. **History Paper Award:** Hope Swenson and Minerva Johnson have the go-ahead for the history contest at the Northwestern Elementary School. A \$50 savings bond will be awarded.

10. **O-BHS NWHS Scholarship:** Margie Koskie moved we award a \$200 senior scholarship in 2003. Irene Parenteau seconded. Motion carried. Word should be given to the guidance department at the high school.

D. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Jim reported that C. Patrick Labadie would be our speaker for our coming meeting. He will speak on Alexander McDougall and the shipping history of this area. Amnicon Town Hall was set as the site. Being our Christmas meeting we would start with a pot-luck supper at 5 p.m. hold our gift exchange. The program would begin at 6 p.m. We would hold our gift "exchange", each wanting to participate to bring a wrapped gift of \$5 value marked man or woman. Those participating would then be asked to donate \$5 to take home a gift.

E. **COMMITTEE REPORTS** (issues not dealt with above.) Appeals were made for future speakers (Lori Madden, Kyle Maunu, and others suggested); appeals for volunteers to the Archives/Collection Committee; appeals for a good grant writer; a thank you to Audrey Hakkila for her publicity; a deadline of January 25th for the next O-BHS News; a reminder that

annual dues and due.

F. ADJOURNMENT

Hope Swenson, Acting Secretary

THANK YOU & RECOGNITIONS

Many thank yous are in order:

—Again to **Richard and Ruth Guhl** of Elmwood Park, Illinois, near Chicago, and summertime Oulu residents. They continue their work of documenting the local cemeteries and genealogical study, and have provided the editor with copies of the 1895 and 1905 Wisconsin Censuses for the Town of Brule (of course “Old-Brule”) and the 1930 US Census for the Town of Brule. It is our intention to get these typed into data base format for local use with a column for corrective and expansive notations..many are needed!

—To **Mr. Darrel Alm** of Duluth who has located and again donated further monthly balance statements for the “Northern Co-operative Society, Iron River, Wisconsin.”

—To **All Members** who have so far renewed their memberships for the year 2003 and to our list of **new family members: Francis and Colleen Orval, Jefferson, WI; Harry and Mary Wester of Bennett, WI;** individual member **Robert A. Sideman** of Glencoe, IL.

—To **Ms. Alvina M. Britz** of Kirksville, MO 63501 for her \$100 donation.

—To the **Gundersons, Delores (Soyring) and Richard**, of Duluth, for donating a copy of the 1943 *Aloha*, year book of Poplar High School. Dick’s aunt, Eleanor Braun, was a faculty member then.

—To new Board member **Paul Colby** and his daughter **Gabrielle** for their part in the care of the grounds at the Davidson Windmill.

WE CANNOT THANK YOU ALL ENOUGH FOR YOUR MEASURES OF CONFIDENCE & SUPPORT.

—and who have we missed or forgotten?

Area History: No. 28

Continuing with the theme of education taken up in our “Area History” in the last newsletter I would like to share again my remarks made before those gathered at the Corner School Reunion Banquet at Northwestern High School on June 27, 1998. It was during this time that we made the first efforts toward formation of what would become the Old-Brule Heritage Society.

—Editor

HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE SEARCH FOR THE EARLY HISTORY OF MAPLE WITH AN EMPHASIS ON AREA SCHOOLS

© 1998 by Jim Pellman

First, thank you for the honor and the opportunity to say a few words about something that has consumed me for most of thirty years: my heritage. All of you here share a tremendous part of that fading heritage with me. By being here you are helping me to restore continuity with our communal past.

Our nation's first lady (Hillary Clinton at the time) reminds us that it takes a village to raise a child. She is right. But there is more: it takes a certain kind of village, a small caring place. In our case we have called it a town, but towniness takes many different meanings, maybe a different meaning for each one of us. Somewhere along the way we begin to share our sense of this caring place and we call that place home. Maple is that place in the deepest heart of most of us here, and the Corner School is the place at home where we began the formal process of sharing and understanding our sense of home with a larger, and too often forbidding world.

In its smallness and intimacy, even after numerous

consolidations, Maple Corner School remained a gentle place to find our places in the world. Our parents wanted us there, learning, mastering our opportunities. Our state wanted us there, more coldly, shaping the policies that prepared us for life in this vast nation. We must thank both.

To get to colder facts:

The earliest record of the Corner School is in land records for the property on which it is located which indicate a transfer of one acre of land from Matt Pelto and wife Mary to the School Directors of the Town of Brule on the 21st of April, 1898. This would make this year the true Centennial of the acquisition of the property for the Corner School. [Classes at earliest would have been held in the fall of 1898.]

The next earliest record [Note: this has since been superseded by the Sandberg? map of 1905 which shows the school.] is that found in a list of teachers in Douglas County going back to the 1907-08 school year, where we find fifteen year old Augusta Jones of Poplar teaching in the Maple Corner School. Her older sister and rooming companion,

Hulda, was teaching that year at the *kaskenkoulu* or Pollari School located about two miles east. It is likely they stayed with the Rev. John Pollari family which was typical (or possibly at the Eric Saari's). Hulda as slightly older sister was there at the insistence of her parents to watch over her younger sibling as she assumed that incredible responsibility.

You may remember the photo of teachers Augusta Jones and Emily Mills in a buggy hitched to a horse standing in front of the early Corner School. Jacob Pollari was their driver, and the photo came from about 1909 or 1910. The earliest known map showing the school is the Kelly map of Douglas County from 1911. The Doenitz and Rettinghouse plat map from 1906 does not show the school, although the Pellinen School erected in 1892 and the Pollari School, erected about 1904, do appear.

The Town of Maple itself was formed by Circuit Court Judge Aad Vinje of Superior (his name is Norwegian) late in the year 1906, carved out of Old Brule which had stretched from west of the Amnicon River valley eastward all the way to the Bayfield County line, and starting on the north from the shore of Lake Superior extended southward to the Town of Nebagamain. These developments occurred simultaneously with the building of the Congdon mansion, Glensheen, in Duluth, which was built over the same years 1905-1908. The Congdons, as did Whaleback builder Alexander McDougall and other prominent Twin Ports residents, eventually had cottage holdings on the Brule River near Winneboujou.

Maple's first annual town meeting was held on Tuesday, April 2, 1907, in the Old Brule Town Hall located on the southeast corner of the intersection of what are now U.S. Highway 2 and County Road F, just east of the old Maple School. The Old Town of Brule, formed in 1887, had created one school just south of Wentworth also in 1892, and in Poplar even earlier, this of course reflecting the areas of earliest settlement in the town. Old Brule's first town meeting had been held near the Poplar railway station at the home of J. M. M. Peterson. Even before this in 1885 classes had been held in the Northern Pacific section house for the first time at the Poplar station in Old Brule.

One Old Brule school, dating from an agreement with Thomas Nephew and the Town of Brule of July 6, 1888, just before the time Fairlawn was being built in Superior, was in the Maple village site itself. This school was situated west, and adjacent to the site of the Old Brule Town Hall but preceded it, the Town Hall being built sometime in 1893 and a town jail next to it. A map from 1889 shows a school north of the Bayfield-Superior Road but this location must be in error. A Northern Pacific railroad map of just earlier vintage calls the Maple village Little Canada. The complex of buildings at this site was located on the Bayfield-Superior Road just down the hill from the Northern Pacific tracks in

the northwest corner of Maple Hotel owner Thomas Nephew's (Demas Neveu's) homestead. A later Town Hall-School combination dating from 1921 would occupy the same site, making it one of the most historically significant spots in the Town, and in the entire Douglas County for that matter.

Another school, if maps are correct, was located in Blueberry, first north, and then eventually moved south of the Northern Pacific tracks, and east of the railroad station there; and one was in the northwestern corner of what would become the modern town of Maple, situated on the northwest corner of the homestead of Finnish immigrant, Jacob Pellinen, again dating from 1892. The Pollari School, again dating from 1904, was named for Rev. John Pollari, an early 1898 settler in the Section 24 area, often called *Kaskenperä*. This was located on the east side of what is now called Haukkala Road where some of you walked this morning, just southeast of the old Koivu place where Ernest Pellman now lives. As with the Corner School site it was the School Board of the Old Town of Brule that purchased land for its construction, and it was sometimes called *kaskenkoulu* (meaning cleared-and-burned-area-school), by the resident Finnish settlers, probably because of the condition of the cutover land in the neighborhood where it was built.

With an 1898 date of property transfer it is surprising that the 1906 Doenitz and Rettinghouse map fails to show the old Corner School [see note above]. If the school was built immediately with the land purchase we can always hope that more photographs or records documenting those earliest years at the school site will appear. Although some Old Brule records do exist the regrettable misplacement or loss of the early volumes of the Old Brule Town Proceedings makes the work much more difficult.

Anyway, old Corner School was certainly there some time before the arrival of the Eric Ukkola family in 1910. Land was steadily being taken up in the cutover areas following the white pine timber cutting for the giant Weyerhaeuser mill in Lake Nebagamon. Logging railroad spurs of the Hawthorne, Nebagamon and Lake Superior Railroad snaked through the countryside at this time. One spur coming from Taylor's Camp located near what would become the Poplar-Maple boundary, skirted the northern boundary of the Corner School grounds. These spurs were soon to be abandoned as the remaining towering pine were cut. Stumps were everywhere and land was selling cheap. It was to serve the many children of even earlier homesteaders, and then the children of this growing population of farmers on the cutover that this first Corner School was built.

Eric Ukkola, who was working for the Great Northern Railroad on its Superior Ore Docks, arrived in Maple at that time on the same train with another Superiorite prospect seeker, Ed Niemi. Eric would continue to work in Superior

on the docks and come home to Maple on weekends. He would hire a man from Finland to come from there to build his house, with the help of his wife! An earlier smaller structure built with the help of neighbors would serve as first home for this wife and their children who would attend the early Corner School. The first Corner School was a one room school with the north wing eventually added, some say after a fire in 1909. Already in 1910 two teachers were serving the students in the school.

Ed Niemi, who had recently been married, had been working as a teamster for his relatives, the Kommes family in Superior. One Kommes brother there had a general store and another a feed mill. Ed found work at the Maple hardwood mill managed by Herman Langer on the Northern Pacific tracks and shortly was managing Edward George Doherty's general store. Doherty had built his store on the exact site where Esther Pollari now lives north of modern U.S. Highway 2. The dirt road it faced was known locally as the Bayfield Road, and later State Highway 10. Ed Niemi would shortly establish his own general store with household built overhead right across the road from Doherty in 1912.

An irony of this Doherty location is that Ed Doherty had lost his pregnant wife due to a ruptured appendix in the spring of 1907 just as he assumed office as Maple's first Town Chairman. While renting from Ed Doherty, Ed Niemi would lose his first wife due to complications of a miscarriage in her first pregnancy four years later at Doherty's well on the very same site.

Settlers buying cutover lands continued to move into the Maple area, mostly into Maple's near north, many coming via mining areas in northern Minnesota, northeastern Wisconsin, and upper Michigan, making it eventually, according to UWS Professor, Thorpe Langley, part of the most densely populated farming region in Wisconsin. This settlement concentration or density reflected the settlement patterns in the Finland where most of these northern settlers had grown up, and in some cases had recently departed. Actually, there was an even earlier Finnish group of homesteading settlers, most making their claims in the late 1880s, coming mainly from the Swedish influenced Lappajärvi area of Vaasanlääni, among these the Pellinens and the Söyrings. Many in the later group came from the area around Kaustinen, a few miles further north, also in Vaasanlääni, among these the Pollaris and the Lavias.

Emphasis in both groups was initially not as much on generating excess crop, produce, or dairy product, as on simply creating a meaningful, free, local life. Later on the local cooperatives and Ed Niemi would provide truck transportation to the dairies in the Twin Ports, after the railroad had its day.

In these early days logging and sawmilling was extremely important as a major source of income, and, in the case of the homesteaders, it also often meant a small windfall that came when the pine of their land was taken, in most cases just after the turn of the century. The Tacke-Langer hardwood mill, for which the Mill Loop is named in the village of Maple, started about this time.

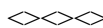
In 1922 with the building of the new brick Corner School the first consolidation of schools occurred when the Pollari and Pellinen Schools closed. Aili Koivu Perala, among us today, went to the Pollari School. Laina Saari Olson, also with us, was among those who went to the Pellinen School. Tyyne Levo Alexson was among those who went to the Old Corner School that had been replaced, and watched the new one being built.

A second consolidation in 1938 brought to Corner School students from Blueberry School and from Maple School. Carl Knudson of the *Telegram*, for articles we much appreciate, interviewed me among others by phone, and in the process was left with the impression that the "new" Blueberry School was in existence for only a year, but this is in error. It was opened about 1930 and was still a young eight years when it closed. Materials from that school, and all schools that were closed, was always recycled locally. The Blueberry School became part of the freezer locker addition to the Maple Coop Store, the siding ending up in part on the garage of John Pellman. This still hardly eased the disappointments that came with each of these closing as we are feeling even today.

But in each case the community rallied around the new circumstances and opportunities. I have often wondered whether I and my siblings would be here today without the painful consolidation of 1938. Other blendings of families and cultures came with these unions.

In 1949 with the construction of Union Free High School, later Northwestern, and the formation of Joint School District No. 1, local school boards were closed in Maple, Hawthorne, Lakeside, Brule, Cloverland, Wentworth, Poplar and Lake Nebagamon. This was a very significant historic threshold. The door was opened at this time for the changes that have happened down to the present, among them the important changes at the end of the 1969 school year when the long tradition of eighth grade graduation and everything that sustained it ended.

New educational philosophies, new conditions and demands drove that change, as they drive the changes of the present. Our presence here today is a reminder of the things that were extremely important and good in the past, that should not be forgotten.



Calendar:

December, DCHS is moving to new headquarter at 1101 John Ave., former Vasa Lodge. Help needed.

December 5, Thursday, 3:30 p.m., a talk by Finnish scholar Markku Kangaspuro on “the Formation of the Karelian Workers’ Communes,” A.B. Anderson Hall, Room 245 at Univ. of Minn, Duluth, arranged by Dr. Alexis Pogorelskin.

December 9, Monday, 1 p.m., O-BHS Archives/Collection Committee biweekly meeting at Delores Pellman’s.

December 10, Tuesday, 1:30 p.m., The Brule History Research Group meets at the Brule Town Hall.

December 11, Wednesday, 5 p.m., O-BHS bimonthly meeting. Christmas meeting. Gift exchange. Speaker: C. Patrick Labadie on Alexander McDougall, whaleback creator and Brule River fisherman.

December 12, Thursday, 7-7:45 p.m., Superior Public Museums and Fairlawn Mansion hosts the Superior School District Singers presenting “Song of Joy,” a concert of holiday music. Free and open to the public.

December 16, Monday, 7 p.m., The Northern Lakes Archaeological Society meets at the Duluth Archaeology Center. Dr. John Bower presents a talk on “The Self-ish Gene: The Mystery of Chatelperronian.” 5910 Fremont St., Duluth. 624-5489 for info.

December 24-25, Tuesday-Wednesday, Christmas Eve-Christmas Day.

December 31, Tuesday, New Year’s Eve, O-BHS 2003 membership dues deadline

January 25, Saturday, deadline for contributions to the February issue of *O-BHS News*.

February 12, Wednesday evening, O-BHS regular bimonthly meeting. Program and details to be announced.

Winter 2002-2003: Keep your eyes open for the *Venture North* production on the Davidson Windmill. Karen Sunderman and Ted Pellman of WDSE Channel 8 spent time with us as we prepared for the Apple Festival weekend tours and bake sale.

WEB SITE ON LINE

Member **Donna Bergsten** has recently been working with Member **Jon Winter** of **Winter Systems** on site changes which have led to a changed web address and to our own independent site (www.oldbrule.org). Please have patience as we master these changes. **Thanks to Audrey Hakkila, Jackie Plunkett, Donna Bergsten, and Jon Winter.**

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, 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 Always WELCOME!

Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc.

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