

# OBHS News

Volume VIII, Issue 2

April 4, 2006

Newsletter of the Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. ©2006  
Founded in 1998 to Preserve and Share the Heritage of the Old-Brule Region.

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### NEXT REGULAR MEETING/PROGRAM

WED., APRIL 12th, 6:00 P. M., AT THE AMNICON TOWN HALL.

**OUR MEETING WILL BEGIN WITH A TALK BY MR. IVAN "SCOTT" NIELSEN. SCOTT'S ROOTS GO BACK DEEP INTO THE HISTORY OF DOUGLAS COUNTY, BACK TO THE EARLIEST 1850'S SETTLERS. HE POSSESSES AN ENCYCLOPEDIA KNOWLEDGE ABOUT OUR REGION'S PAST, AND WILL GIVE US A TALK ON "LOGGING IN THE DOUGLAS COUNTY HIGHLANDS."**

**EVERYONE IS WELCOME! PLEASE BRING A FRIEND.**

**Thanks to Scott and his wife, to the  
Town of Amnicon for the use of their facility,  
and to all who bring refreshments to share (to be served after the program).**

### FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Greetings to All,

I hope everyone's life issues and concerns are continuously progressing amidst positive influences and outcomes; as those around us comfort us, too, in our needs.

Well, we finally had winter in February; it was quite the abnormal winter this year. Our family even missed lawyer (eelpout) spearing due to the vast amount of rain before freeze up. Soon the smelt and suckers will be running and this will provide some entertainment for my children, and for myself. My son and I are preparing our garden, with the pre-planting of a few crops that need a little head start.

I hadn't heard from Harry Wester all winter, and thought he was hibernating. However, he was as busy as a beaver. He made additional plat maps which included listing those residents' names that he could find from 1900 – 2002 who were listed among all the towns and villages of Douglas County. This adds to his earlier achievement of completing his poster board maps for the towns and villages of Old-Brule. Wow, that's a lot of work – Kudos to Harry.

Another major achievement of our group is Jim Pellman's 2006 calendar continuing the Brule History Research Group tradition. He labored many hours on the project to produce a magnificent historical calendar. The calendar is extremely professional and a very high quality product, and now available – Kudos to Jim as well.

The Eskolin log house looks great, finally resting at the windmill site. We'll need some help renovating the log house in the next few months. However our first priority will be to fix the roof as soon as possible. I'll have to give a special thanks to Donald and Julie Anderson and everyone who helped with this project and those who supported it, too. I saw Scott Essen of Essen Concrete at Northern Hydraulics and he mentioned that he'll start the lean-to slab and handicap accessible apron when we're ready.

Over here in Lakeside we're still working on our unique historical book for our Centennial this year. We're submitting a grant application to the Wisconsin Humanities Council asking for some modest assistance as a match to our valuable donated time and publication costs. We'll be conducting an Ice Cream Social on May 7<sup>th</sup> from 1-3:00 at the Lakeside Town Hall. We're also planning a Centennial Picnic for August 19. Lake Nabagamon

is planning for their Centennial Celebration this year, too, with events on June 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>. Another event this year comes with O-BHS's decision to hold another Midsummer Celebration on June 24, with our Scandinavian Dinner and Windmill Tours. Our ladies do a fine job organizing this event; Alice Christiansen will guide them again this year.

We in Lakeside have only two more payments left on our Town Hall/Fire Department building. It was nice of Butch Merila to donate his time in drawing the plans for our Town Hall. This past Supervisor and Lakeside Little League coach saved the taxpayers some money with his generosity.

I was glad to see the Superior Carnegie Library saved, hoping we wouldn't see another questionable decision and tragedy in razing another of the irreplaceable historic buildings in Superior, sound in structure, just to gain a minute amount of tax revenue, e.g., the historic Martin Pattison School, and the old Central High School (1928 Coolidge Summer White House).

Congratulations to the *Connection* newspaper late out of Port Wing. I've heard they're expanding, going biweekly, and moving to Iron River. On the other hand, local management may be forced to march to a different tune after the sale of the *Evening Telegram* and *News Tribune* as part of the Knight Ridder system.

I keep forgetting to mention the awesome caboose in Poplar on Highway 2. What a great idea and attraction for the owner's beautiful farm.

Enjoy the next two months watching the natural life transformation around us.

Regards,

Paul

p.s. We're seeing wolves more often and had quite the experience with our dogs one morning in my back yard. Our ferocious dachshund almost became an hors d'oeuvre while ordering our other two dogs back from a nose to nose encounter with the wolves.

#### FROM THE EDITOR:

It is spring and a time for optimism and new beginnings. The Grapentine maple sap buckets are again hanging from the trees in back along the Mill Loop. The grainy snow which two weeks ago was still two feet deep has given way to large patches of matted, mildewy old leaves and grass (the culprit in a lot of sinus headaches this time of year) on the forest floor. Snow plows are coming off the front of local pickups, and snow shovelers, with cautious optimism, are hanging up their tools out of the way in sheds and garages. Industrious homeowners are filling ruts and gouges, and are replacing sod torn up in lawns bordering roadways. Much emptier wood bins are being swept or raked, and chimneys brushed. Thoughts are going to readying starter boxes for flowers and tomatoes. For some the lure of early Brule River steelhead is too much and this work is set aside for another day.

Despite the work, these rituals of spring in a rural place are comforting, and connecting. As we work we remember those who shared these tasks once with us, a generation - two - or even three generations back. We again partner with them in bowing to the rhythm of the seasons. The newly arrived robins watch and wait with us for the last frost to rise from the earth. Hungry ravens and crows pick at newly revealed, thawing, deer carcasses along the treacherous Highway 2 corridor. Driveways firm up and the highway crews on the County roads steadily tamp and renew the asphalt plugs that protect our vehicle alignments.

But amidst this spring reawakening rumbling has started about the condition of our local schools with frightening estimates of the cost of upgrades. Somehow we have created institutions far removed from the natural scale described in the paragraphs above. Modern consuming budgets leave little money even for the roads over which the students and the locally sustaining industries must move. The disconnect seems to grow, year by year, and the essence of humble, frugal, local, rural life, is drowned out, as those who remember the old, modest, ways steadily pass away. The structures that we have even as they are would be the envy of the multitudes on earth, if we could adequately care for them, if we could in more modest fashion adequately care enough for those who are specially challenged by the structural limits of the old. But this care and humility, unless they are nurtured,

become strangers in our huge, modern, institutions — care for our neighbors, care for our local government, care for institutional structures which we hope would be filled with the sacrifice and humility of service found in true art and science.

Finally, I, too, would like to thank the Grube's and the crew that moved the Anderson/Eskolin house!

-Jim Pellman

**NEW! 2006 OLD-BRULE HISTORY PHOTO CALENDAR NOW AVAILABLE.**

The Brule History Research Group, organized in 1995, produced its eighth and final calendar in 2005 with more pictures of Brule's past. Proceeds of these annual calendar sales since 1998, when the first one was produced, are being used for the publication of the history of Brule, hopefully to be completed soon. Limited numbers of the 2005 calendar and earlier issues are still available. To order any of these calendars by mail, please write or call Janet Follis, P. O. Box 114, Brule, WI 54820 (715) 372-4948.

Continuing the BHRG calendar tradition, the first *Old-Brule Heritage Society History Photo Calendar* is now available in limited numbers. 400 copies have been published and they are available this year only for \$5.00 from O-BHS members or at limited local business outlets. An e-mail address for more info: [musketeer6@cheqnet.net](mailto:musketeer6@cheqnet.net) and phone: 715-363-2549.

**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.**

**ARCHIVES/COLLECTIONS COMMITTEE.**

The Archives Committee would welcome other volunteers to help us in this important part of the O-BHS mission. Our current project is learning to use the computer in support of our work, scanning documents and photos, storing records and creating data bases. Our thanks to our loyal committee members and contributors, and to the Town of Maple for archive space. If you enjoy exacting work please join us at 1 p.m. at the Pellmans' some Monday afternoon. Next meeting: April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Please call 363-2549 to confirm meeting time and place.

**(UNAPPROVED) MINUTES, REGULAR MEETING  
OLD BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.  
FEBRUARY 22, 2006, MISSION COVENANT CHURCH**

Attendance: 22 members and guests

Time: 6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order by Paul Colby.

BUSINESS MEETING: 7:50 p.m.

MINUTES: A motion to approve the minutes of the Dec. 14, 2005 meeting was made by Jim Pellman, seconded by Earl Granroth. Motion carried.

FINANCIAL REPORT:

Our treasurer was not present due to illness.

Checking Account Balance \$ 2034.47

Mill Fund Balance \$10439.48

Books sold to date -515

Dues are due at this time. Thanks to those who have paid.

OLD BUSINESS: Jim Pellman presented Ron Mershart with a Windmill sweatshirt in appreciation for all his good works. A certificate had been presented to him at the reception in his honor at the Historical Society. Dr. Mershart is assisting the Town of Lakeside Centennial group prepare a grant for their book.

DAVIDSON WINDMILL: The log house is still not moved but hopes are to have it moved soon. Grube has been busy logging so has not yet had time to move it. Alice Christensen made a motion to offer an additional \$200 to Grube (making it a total of \$700) for the moving; seconded by Jim Pellman. Motion carried.

ARCHIVES COMMITTEE: The committee meets every other Monday at the Pellman home. Additional volunteers are welcome. They are scanning photos and documents received from Kenny Makela and are working on records of the Brule Co-op Park and Co-op Services records. Next meeting is March 6 at 1 p.m. Elvie Agacki has joined the Archives group.

WEBSITE. Waiting for software. Jon Winter has been provided with a non profit status number that he needed. The software will be free from Microsoft.

PUBLICATIONS: Jim brought a few copies of the prototype of the calendar he has been working on. He asked for ideas of businesses who would purchase an ad for the calendar. He hopes to get it printed in March. A motion was made by Jim Pellman to charge \$15.00 for an ad for this year and to charge \$5.00 for the calendars. Seconded by Earl Granroth. Motion carried. Jim Pellman made a motion to offer O-BHS to be the fiscal agent for the Lakeside Centennial Book; seconded by Hope Swenson. Motion carried. They will use our ISBN number. As fiscal agent we would receive the money from the Wisconsin Humanities Council grant and then dole it out to the Lakeside group. A token amount would be given to our group for our services.

#### NEW BUSINESS:

NEXT MEETING: The next Board meeting will be at the Pellman home on March 8 at 6 p.m. The next regular meeting will be on April 12<sup>th</sup> at Amnicon Town Hall at 6 p.m. if available. A possible speaker would be Scott Nielsen, who would speak on railroad/logging history in the area.

MIDSUMMER EVENT: Alice Christensen agreed to chair the dinner again. She will call a meeting. She will check with Duane Lahti in Oulu to see what they are planning in their town.

DONATIONS: \$500 has been received from Murphy Oil for the Windmill Fund. Also an anonymous \$500 donation has been accepted to be donated to the Lake Nebagamon Centennial celebration in OBHS' name.

ADJOURNMENT: A motion was made by Earl Granroth, seconded by Alice Christensen to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m. The program was presented by Chuck and Eve Zosel on their trip to Iceland. Several additional people attended the program, which was followed by lunch provided by members.

Respectfully submitted,  
Mary Ann Gronquist

#### FUND-RAISING MERCHANDISE FOR SALE

The Society has available regional history magnets, plus Davidson Windmill memorabilia: mugs, caps and tee shirts and sweat 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. Sweat shirts, any size are \$25.00, taxes included.

Available also are copies of a David Noah Seis photograph of the mill for sale. This image comes in three sizes: 4 by 5 inches, 5 by 7 inches, and 8 ½ 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 image is available in our magnet series.

Our book, *Wisconsin Far Northwest*, and Nan Wisherd's *Pathways* are available for \$20.00 a copy + \$3.00 shipping. Wisconsin tax is included in all our prices. Shipping and handling for mugs, caps and tee shirts is a \$4.00 minimum. All items are available for purchase at our meetings or by contacting an O-BHS member.

**(UNAPPROVED) MINUTES BOARD MEETING  
OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY, MAR. 8, 2006, PELLMAN HOME, MAPLE**

Present: Paul Colby, Shirley Kankas-Rouleau, Jim Pellman, Earl Granroth, Barbara Granroth, Hope Swenson, Alice Christensen, Delores Pellman, Harry Wester, Paul Colby, Karin Colby, Irene Parenteau, Marian Christensen and Mary Ann Gronquist.

WELCOME:

BUSINESS MEETING: Meeting called to order at 6:20 p.m.

A. MINUTES. A motion to approve the minutes of the Jan. 11, 2006 Board meeting was made by Earl Granroth, seconded by Alice Christensen. Motion carried.

B. FINANCIAL REPORT (Jan. 11 to Mar. 8, 2006)

INCOME:

Interest	\$ 12.29
Book Sales	220.00
Lunch collection	18.00
Donations	414.40 (\$200.00 from Lyle Fechtelkotter family, \$214.40 from Mill View Riders Snowmobile Club)
<b>TOTAL INCOME:</b>	<b>\$1034.69</b>

EXPENSES:

Dept of Rev-Sales Tax	166.00
DCHS hall rental	40.00
Postage	206.80
Calendar prototype	15.68
Mission Covenant rental	50.00
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES:</b>	<b>\$ 478.48</b>

BALANCES:

Checking:	\$2839.40
Mill Fund:	\$10444.55

A motion to accept the financial report was made by Jim Pellman, seconded by Earl Granroth. Motion carried.

C. OLD BUSINESS:

1. DAVIDSON MILL: Discussed the log house moving. Paul will put up the fire number.
2. FUNDRAISING: Jim is still looking for a source for windmill pins and magnets. We discussed acquiring sponsors for the calendar. Copies of a solicitation letter were distributed to those attending. The deadline is March 15. Hope to have calendar ready in April.
3. ARCHIVES: The next meeting is at the Pellman home on Mar. 20, 1 p.m. (every other Monday.) More volunteers are needed.
4. WEBSITE: Still waiting for free software. Jon Winter is working to acquire it. Website address is [www.oldbrule.org](http://www.oldbrule.org).
5. LOIS POLLARI GIFT: No further progress.
6. PUBLICITY: Articles in *The Connection* and *Daily Telegram* are being submitted by Audrey Hakkila.
7. PUBLICATIONS: No progress on Heritage Map – on hold until calendar is done. Calendars will sell for \$5.00 this year. Ads are \$15.00 this year. Books sold to date – 527.
8. MEMBERSHIPS: Dues are still being collected for 2006. Keep track of your volunteer hours on your blue form.
9. POLLARI MEMORIAL GIFT: No further progress.
10. DAVID MAKI GRANT: No further progress.
11. CENTENNIAL FARMS: New blanks are available from Jim Pellman.
12. LAKE NEBAGAMON CENTENNIAL: Anonymous gift should be coming soon.
13. UPCOMING REGULAR MEETING: Will be Wed., April 12 at Amnicon Town Hall, 6 p.m. Scott Nielsen has been contacted as a speaker. Joe Cozmos (sp?) is a possibility for a future speaker, possibly in June.
14. NEXT BOARD MEETING: Will be at Harry Wester's home on May 10, 6 p.m.
15. MIDSUMMER DINNER AND TOUR: Alice has reserved the Lakeside Town Hall for June 22, 23 and 24. The dinner will be held on Saturday, June 24 from 11 to 2. The tours will be Friday, June 23 from 4 to 7, and Saturday, June 24 and Sunday, June 25 from 9 to 4. New signs for the

dinner were discussed. A motion to allocate up to \$200 for two double sided signs was made by Jim Pellman, seconded by Hope Swenson. Motion carried. Alice Christensen will look into having them made.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. ANNUAL REPORT: Jim Pellman and Shirley Rouleau will work on the annual report.

2. OTHER: Harry Wester brought new maps of each town in Douglas County that he has made. Paul Colby gave an update on the Lakeside Centennial plans.

3. COMMUNICATIONS: A letter has been received from Gloria Johnson of Poplar regarding our book (good review). Newsletters have been received from various historical societies. An invitation to participate in the Superior Fourth of July parade was received. The consensus seemed to be to not participate this year. There was a discussion on whether to order more books or publish a new more pictorial book. No action taken. Paul Colby has ordered a communication entitled "Windmillers' Gazette.

A program on Finnish Language and Culture will be held at UMD on Aug. 6-12. Jim has information on it.

4. ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn made by Earl Granroth, seconded by Hope Swenson, to adjourn. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 9:50.

Respectfully submitted  
Mary Ann Gronquist

Area History:  
No. 49

Another excerpt (pages 86-87) from our book, *Wisconsin Far Northwest*, ©2004, 2005.

## THE VILLAGE OF LAKE NEBAGAMON

Nebagamon National Bicentennial History Committee, Shirley Kankas-Rouleau, Lois Pollari, Jim Pellman

The Village of Lake Nebagamon is fortunate in having a large volume dedicated to its interesting past. Two groups have taken on the task of gathering information and preparing the text. Kay Coletta has been part of both groups and prepares for yet another revised version. She and her husband, Tony, have, in the two plus decades of residency in the Village, made their mark there, and in the region. We shall restrict our remarks here to those historical issues of interest to the region as a whole.

Lake Nebagamon's general history corresponds to those of the communities it rests amidst. The region was of interest to Native Americans as a hunting site, and its name reflects that: *Nee-bay-go-moh-win*, Chippewa for "a place to hunt deer by fire from the water." Of course fishing was important as well and the proximity to the trout waters of the upper Brule made it an important destination site. This is reflected in the ancient overland trail that was identified by George Stuntz on his early surveys of the region, which ran from the mouth of the Middle River on Lake Superior, south over the maple sugaring grounds around Maple, and then on to Nebagamon. The natural beauty of the village site overlooking Lake Nebagamon has always struck visitors, even the loggers intent on harvesting the wealth in the surrounding forests.

The name Nebagamain, a closer approximation to the Chippewa, once was applied to one of the three large towns that covered Douglas County after 1887, with Superior, and Brule the other two. Already at this time Frederick Weyerhaeuser and his associates, namely Edward Rutledge and E. L. Ainsworth, in the case of Nebagamon, were in the process of buying up white pine lands in the area. Their largest purchase came with the buyout in the early 1890s of the land grant lands given to the

Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha, the “Omaha,” as first railroad to build into the region. This would also become the railroad that the Nebagamon Lumber Company would use to ship lumber to the waiting markets throughout the nation. The purchase amounted to almost every other section of land in northern Douglas County. Initial plans seem to have been to put the mill in Superior with the other mills already operating there, but disputes over freight rates, and unseemly publicity in the Twin Ports press led the mill planners and investors, among them John P. Weyerhaeuser, Frederick’s son, to put their mill in Lake Nebagamon. The main line serving Lake Nebagamon in its early days was the Duluth, South Shore & Atlantic, built across northern Wisconsin in 1893. It would remain until 1932.

At the time of the Omaha lands purchase, permanent settlers were beginning to move into northern Douglas County. Coming to Nebagamon in 1894 were John Ryberg, Swan Swanberg, Soren Anderson, John Severtson, Ole Nordman and John Danielson, who built their cabins at Lake Nebagamain.

Once cutting was done another Weyerhaeuser company, the American Immigration Company, went about selling these lands to prospective farmers. Other land companies became involved in this sale and settlement process as the region had many acres that were not well suited to agriculture. While in the area the lumber company camps provided winter work for locals and a place to sell produce, hay and other needs. The mill itself employed at full capacity 400 men, with 600 men employed in the logging camps. The company also paid tremendous amounts in property taxes which revenue helped inspire some of the town formation that took place at the time.

**Figure 29.** *Weyerhaeuser’s Nebagamon Lumber Company logs stored in Half Moon Bay on Lake Nebagamon, about 1900. Operating from 1898-1907 the company cut 90,000,000 board feet of lumber in one average season and made total profits of \$3,516,000 for the firm. Weyerhaeuser Company Archives.*



The Village of Lake Nebagamon was formed in 1907, at the same time as Maple was formed by actions of the same Circuit Court Judge, Aad Vinje, of Superior. In addition to land from the old Town of Nebagamon the village took three sections from the Town of Brule. The mill by this time was already winding down its operation. With the Village of Lake Nebagamon the towns of Highland, Hawthorne and Solon Springs came into being. The Town of Nebagamon remnant became Bennett a year later. The Nebagamain name had been shortened by 1902 in the naming of the post office, under Weyerhaeuser’s influence. Another Weyerhaeuser legacy were extensive land contributions along the Brule River to the State which formed the nucleus for the Brule River State Forest. The site of company operations is now Camp Nebagamon for Boys.

## Notices:

### THANK YOU'S & RECOGNITIONS:

To the **many businesses** who chose to place ads in our new calendar; to the **Lyle Fechtelkotter family** for their memorial; to the **Mill View Riders Snowmobile Club** for their generous donation and archive gift; to

**Everyone** caught up on their dues for 2006.

**CONGRATULATIONS:** To **Doris Perala** on her recent birthday!

### ENCOURAGEMENTS:

To members, **Margie Koskie, Cash Christensen, Jack Gronquist, and Hope Swenson.**

**OUR SYMPATHY:** To the **Rampier** and the **Pearson families** on the loss of **Mrs. Heidemann**, -and who have we missed or forgotten?

## Calendar:

**April 10**, Monday, next Archives meeting at Pellmans in Maple. 1 pm.

**April 12**, Wednesday, next O-BHS regular meeting, Amnicon Town Hall, 6 p.m. Scott Nielsen on Logging in Douglas C.

**April 13**, Thursday, Passover, Thomas Jefferson's Birthday.

**April 14**, Good Friday. **April 16**, Sunday, Easter.

**May 7**, Sunday, Town of Lakeside Centennial, Ice Cream Social from 1-3:00 at the Lakeside Town Hall

**May 15**, Monday, Deadline for June issue of *O-BHS News*.

**June 11**, Sunday, Lake Nebagamon Centennial Meet & Greet, Auditorium.

**June 23-25**, O-BHS Midsummer Celebration, Windmill and Lakeside Town Hall. Mill tours, and Saturday Meal (11-2).

**June 25**, Sunday, Lake Nebag. Cent., Ice Cream Social, St. Anthony's, Quilt & Fashion Shows, Rug Hooking, Auditorium.

**August 19**, Saturday, Town of Lakeside Centennial Picnic.

## WEB SITE ON LINE

The Website Committee has been working with member **Jon Winter** of **Winter Systems in Superior** on our own independent site ([www.oldbrule.org](http://www.oldbrule.org)). Thank you for your patience as we work to build up the site. Thanks to **Audrey Hakkila** for her efforts. **MS Web site software had just been received permitting updates to the site!**

**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) 364-2500, or our Treasurer, Shirley Kankas Rouleau, at 374-2413. Her address is PO Box 171, Lake Nebagamon, WI 54849. Our annual dues are \$15.00 for individuals, and \$25.00 for families, payable at the time of our annual meeting. Higher levels of support are always welcome.**

**New Members and Visitors are Always WELCOME!**

Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc.  
Post Office Box 24  
Maple, WI 54854