

OBHS News

Volume XI, Issue 2

April 3, 2009

Newsletter of the Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. ©2009
Founded in 1998 to Preserve and Share the History and Heritage of the Old-Brule Region.

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APRIL OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8, 2009, 5:00 P.M. AT THE SUPERIOR PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Program: Carl Gawboy Historical Murals Tour.

WE WILL BEGIN OUR EVENING BY GATHERING IN THE LARGE PUBLIC MEETING ROOM.

OUR MURAL TOUR WILL FOLLOW. WE WILL BREAK FOR A PIZZA LUNCH,

AND OUR BUSINESS MEETING WILL COMPLETE THE EVENING.

ALL MEMBERS AND GUESTS ARE WELCOME!

**Thanks to the Superior Public Library for the tour and the use of the meeting room,
and to Lila Ronn for making arrangements.**

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

In the early 1930's and 1940's life wasn't complicated, but to survive a person had to work long and hard hours of physical labor. All the neighbors grew their own vegetables and beef, although venison was plentiful. I am sure I ate a lot of venison, though I never gave it much thought, as this was part of life. We survived. Fresh milk was our usual drink, as we didn't have sugared drinks of any kind. The meat was canned, and all of the root crop was stored in a cellar (*kellari* in Finnish). This was a large hole dug into the hillside which had a dirt floor and shelves to store canned goods, all the potatoes and rutabagas, and possibly onions. This cellar had a heavy door and through the winter was banked with snow to maintain the temperature inside, to keep it from freezing.

The yards weren't groomed; I remember how my dad, Hjalmer Walman, would cut the grass around the house with a scythe (*viikate* in Finnish) a couple of times each summer. We were warned to stay far away, as this scythe was very sharp and took long sweeps.

Most all of the neighborhood had a separate building called a summer kitchen, and by the end of May we would move into it to keep the house cooler, and also because it was the time to do spring cleaning. All the moveable stuff in the house would be brought outside, including the mattresses, which us kids would have to pound with a broom to get out the dust. I'm sure every one of us can relate to this.

We weren't able to go to supermarkets in those days, so instead we did our shopping locally, at Ed Niemi's Red & White Store, at the Farmers' Coop in Maple, at the Blueberry Store, at Alex Maki's near the Middle River in Lakeside (where my dad would buy salt fish), and at Reuben Peterson's in Cloverland. The Peterson store carried groceries, and hardware, such as nails, a small amount of building materials, and some paint.

We all lived a simple life, but I believe we were a closer knit community at that time, and knew our neighbors better.

Sincerely,
Alice Christensen

FROM THE EDITOR:

To what degree are we here in the Old-Brule region economic creatures? Amidst the scrambling and posturing that has followed the recent credit collapse and the steep stock market drop, I have been trying to gather information about the history of the last “panic” of this magnitude, the Great Depression of the 1930s. This brought to mind *A Pioneer in Old Superior*, a book from 1930 by Lillian Kimball Stewart, daughter of Charles Kimball, one of the “Ontonagon Bunch,” men associated with Michigan copper prospecting who competed for the first lots in what eventually became the City of Superior. Mrs. Stewart was seventy at the time her book was published.

She vividly recalled those early days in the “Superior City” frontier, but what was striking was the strong parallel with the problems of today. She and her family lived through what then was bluntly called an economic “panic,” in this case the famous Panic of 1857. Superior, which had almost instantly grown to 2,500 citizens, soon was reduced to around 600, a number also depressed by the failure of a promised railroad to be built into the region. There is a modern sensibility to Mrs. Stewart’s description of events, complete with assessments of how the economic calamity took place. One assumed cause of the collapse was the sinking of a single steam sidewheeler, the SS *Central America* on 9/11 off the East Coast which carried millions of dollars in gold in all shapes and forms. The wreck was finally discovered 8,500 feet down, gold and artifacts salvaged in the late 1980s. The *Central America*’s gold and passengers had transferred across the isthmus of Panama from another vessel, coming from the booming gold fields of California. Some believed this massive insured loss was the panic’s triggering event, but others blamed the collapse on depressed agriculture prices after the end of the Crimean War. As today, the collapse had international consequences. According to Wikipedia:

“The immediate event that touched off the panic was the failure on August 24 of the New York City branch of the Ohio Life Insurance and Trust Co., a major financial force that collapsed following massive embezzlement. In the wake of this event, a series of other setbacks shook the public's confidence, including:

The decision of British investors to remove funds from U.S. banks, which raised questions about over all soundness

The fall of grain prices, which spread economic misery into rural areas.

Russia's underselling of U.S. cotton on the open market;

The piling up of manufactured goods in warehouses, leading to massive layoffs.

Widespread railroad failures, indicating an over-built status of the American railroad system.

The collapse of land speculation programs which depended on new rail routes, ruining thousands of investors.

Investor confidence was further shaken in mid-September when 30,000 pounds of gold were lost at sea in a shipment from the San Francisco Mint to eastern banks. More than 400 lives were lost when the SS *Central America* sank. Public confidence in the government's ability to back its paper currency with specie [gold] was shaken as well.”

The remedies also have a familiar ring:

“At the suggestion of Howell Cobb, Secretary of the Treasury, President James Buchanan proposed to Congress that the Treasury be authorized to sell revenue bonds for the first time since the Mexican War.

In October, a bank holiday was declared in New England and New York in a vain effort to avert runs on those institutions. Eventually the panic and depression spread to Europe, South America and the Far East. No recovery was evident in the United States for a year and a half and the full impact did not dissipate until the American Civil War.”

-Jim Pellman

2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 OLD-BRULE HISTORY PHOTO CALENDARS FOR SALE.

The Brule History Research Group, organized in 1995, produced its eighth and final calendar in 2005 with 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 their 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 in the BHRG calendar tradition, the *2009 Old-Brule Heritage Society History Photo Calendar* is now available at \$7.00 each. Our earlier calendars are also available at \$5.00 (2005, 2006) and \$6.00 (2008) in limited numbers. The 2009 calendar is available from O-BHS members or at limited local business outlets. An e-mail address for more info: musketeer6@cheqnet.net, and phone: 715-363-2549, or check our Web site at www.oldbrule.org. Shipping and handling costs are \$3.50 each.

OPINIONS EXPRESSED IN THE *OBHS 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 OBHS mission. Our continuing project is learning to use the computer in support of our work, scanning documents and photos, storing records and creating databases. 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 meetings: April 6th, 2009, 1:00 p.m. Please call 363-2549 to confirm meeting time and place.

Unapproved GENERAL MEETING MINUTES OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

Town of Maple Community Center
February 11, 2009, 6:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER: Following a slide presentation by Board Member Jim Pellman that explained the process of creating the 2009 OBHS calendar and provided information related to each of the month's photographs; and a light lunch; the business meeting was called to order by Alice Christensen at 8:28 p.m.

MINUTES: A correction was made to the minutes of the General Meeting on December 10, 2008, as published in the February 5, 2009 OBHS Newsletter. Ina Erickson's name was incorrectly listed as Ina Anderson. Audrey made a motion, seconded by Mary Anne, to approve these corrected minutes. Motion carried.

TREASURER'S REPORT: No report was given.

OLD BUSINESS:

Davidson Windmill Committee:

Sidewalk: The Board has decided to seek outside help for engraving and coloring of the pavers. *Northland Reflections in Wood*, a business in West Duluth, will engrave and darken the lettering on each paver for a cost of \$8.50. The cost of these brick pavers will now be \$15.00. Redesigned forms are available from Jim P. or on our Website.

Grounds: Earl is working on signage. Tree protection is in place. Our Memorial tree (tamarack) has been planted; the annual Memorial Ceremony is planned for Midsummer.

Eskolin House: Alice reported that she and Marilyn Pank would be cleaning the cupboards before their installation. There was general consensus to proceed with a plan to install a Dutch door, with a screen to be included with the top unit of the door. A Dutch door is compatible with Finnish architecture and would function well, allowing light, ventilation, and necessary insect protection. Jim P., Ina Erickson, and Earl Granroth volunteered to work on a committee that would provide specs for this door to John Lundeen in a timely fashion. Our goal is to have the door completed by Midsummer. This committee will report their progress at the next general meeting.

Fund-raising Committee: Solicitation letters still need to be sent out. After discussion regarding choice of an auditor, Audrey made a motion to select B&B at the cost of \$250. After a second by Hope, the motion was passed.

Archives Committee: Next meeting at Pellman's, Monday, February 23 at 1:00 p.m.

Website Committee: Earl passed around prints of OBHS website pages he has developed, including an order form that included an attractive photo of our new blue cap. Except for some of the earliest editions, all of the OBHS newsletters are on this website.

Pollari Memorial Gift Committee: Work continues, but the map completion and publication will wait until Lois returns.

Publicity/Advertising Committee: Audrey has done an excellent job sending press announcements to all of the local newspapers. Mary Ann is working on new brochures.

Publications Committee: 2009 calendars have been selling well.

Membership Committee: Volunteer hour forms for hours ending July 31, 2008 need to be turned in. New members include Don & Andrea Yrjanainen, Ina Erickson, and Viola Palo. A generous business membership renewal and donation was received from Paul Dennis Northern Finnish Mutual Agency.

Brule History Research Group: Slow, but steady progress.

Taylor's Bridge: Further work will begin this spring when snow has melted.

Mid-summer Scandinavian Tours & Dinner: The dinner will be held on Saturday, June 20, 2009 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The Windmill open house will take place from 9:00 to 5:00 on Saturday only.

NEW BUSINESS:

Communications: The Wester Douglas County Historical maps have been given to John Altshool. He paid for the all the shipping and duplication costs of these maps and also extended his membership in OBHS.

Next General Meeting: The April General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 8 at the Superior Public Library, beginning at 5:00 p.m. We will be ordering pizza. The program will include a tour of the Carl Gawboy historic murals in this library.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 11 at the Eskolin House, with Alice's house a backup.

Sympathy and Encouragement: Sympathy to the family and friends of Arnold Perala and Dennis Ahola. Audrey thanked everyone for cards, gifts, and words of sympathy following the death of her grandson, Dennis.

Next Windmill Committee Meeting: April 6, 2009 at the Eskolin House.

Other New Business: Jim P. provided a visual of a Dutch door that could serve as a model for one to be constructed at the Eskolin House. The door would be a 2 x 4 heavy panel door, with no shelf in the middle. Barbara Granroth moved that we accept this style of door. After a second by Eddie Walman, the motion was approved. There was a discussion about a need to finish the door, with painting a possibility.

ADJOURNMENT: Earl made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Audrey. The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lila M. Ronn, Secretary

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. Early issue magnets are going for \$1 each ,or 6 for \$5.00, proceeds to our general fund. The Windmill mugs are \$4.00, old stock caps, \$5.00, and tee shirts, any size, \$10, all proceeds going into the Windmill Fund. Sweat shirts, any size are \$25.00, now on sale at ½ price, taxes included. ***SEE OUR WEB SITE (www.oldbrule.org) FOR CURRENT SALE ITEMS AND PRICES.***

Available also are copies of a David Noah Seis photograph of the mill. 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 books, *Pathways* and *Echoes* , and Lakeside's *Sisu and Sauna* are available for \$20.00 a copy + \$4.00 shipping. Wisconsin tax is included in all of our prices. Shipping and handling for mugs, caps and tee shirts is a \$4.00 minimum. All items are also available for purchase at our meetings or by contacting an O-BHS member. O-BHS Calendars for 2006 & 2007 (\$5), 2008(\$6) and 2009 (\$7) are also available (\$3.50 shipping). See box on Page 2 above for more info.

Unapproved BOARD MEETING MINUTES OLD BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

Home of Alice Christensen, Town of Amnicon

March 11, 2009

Members Present: President Alice Christensen, Second Vice President Harry Wester, Secretary Lila Ronn, Irene Brazill, Paul Colby, Mary Ann Gronquist, Jim Pellman, and Hope Swenson.

CALL TO ORDER: Alice called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m.

MINUTES: Jim moved to accept the minutes for the January 8, 2009 board meeting as printed in the February newsletter of OBHS. After a second by Hope, the minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Alice reported that we have \$3,216.08 in our checking account at the National Commerce Bank in Poplar. No current information was available on our Money Market/CD account or our Davidson Windmill Savings Account, but these balances will have changed little from last month. Hope moved that we accept this report: Jim seconded the motion and it was approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Davidson Windmill Committee Report:

Sidewalk: Alice and Jim are bringing available pavers to Mike Booker from *Northland Reflections in Wood*; he will be completing the "etch and fill" process on them for the cost of \$8.50 each. This quote is effective until January 8, 2010. Cost for ordering pavers is now \$15. Hope moved and Irene seconded a motion that we order one larger paver (probably one 16" x 16") that would be placed in the middle of the octagon pattern by the windmill. This paver could include the name of our organization, its founding date, and possibly, additional information provided by Gene Davidson. The motion passed.

Biffy Storage Building: On hold.

Grounds: Jim is seeking more information about security lighting.

Memorial Tree: The annual Memorial Ceremony is planned for Midsummer.

Signage: Earl is investigating

Eskolin House: The Dutch door design was approved at the February General Meeting. Alice will contact John Lundeen and ask him to proceed with this design.

Mill Merchandise: No report.

Windmill History Booklet: Jim and Gene Davidson plan to complete this soon. Paul Colby previously secured a \$500 grant from ConocoPhillips to publish this booklet. A copy will be sent to this organization along with a follow-up report. Information in the booklet will also be used for our web site.

Next Mill Committee Meeting: April 6 at the Eskolin House.

Fund-Raising Committee Report: A decision was made at the February General Meeting that B & B would complete our audit.

Archives Committee: Ina Erickson has been doing a great job entering information on the database for this committee. They are currently working on Elmer Hermanson (Lakeside) records, Maple Farmers' Coop records, the inventory of Town of Maple photos, and old Carl Bong records donated by Joyce Erickson.

Website Committee: The contact button option, allowing users to communicate directly with our website, is not yet operative. Jon Winter and Earl are working on the problem.

Pollari Memorial Gift Committee: Expecting completion by Mid-summer events.

Publicity/Advertising Committee: Audrey and Mary Ann continue to do a great job.

Publications Committee: 95 Calendars remain to be sold.

Membership Committee: Dues collection for 2009 continues.

Brule History Research Group: Committee continues their work.

Taylor's Bridge: Will be worked on when snow is gone.

Clarification of Officer Job Descriptions: Jim is working on this task.

Finance Committee: Work will begin on budget upon Ron's return.

Next Board Meeting: May 13th, 6:00 p.m., Eskolin House

Next General Meeting: April 8th, 5:00 p.m. Superior Public Library. (Note earlier start time.) Program will include a Carl Gawboy mural tour. We will be ordering pizza.

Nan Wisherd Books: Nan has been paid \$45 for two books that we sold at Finnfest and three to be part of our inventory. Jim returned additional books to her that we had in our supply, leaving OBHS with an inventory of 10 books. Thanks to Nan.

Mid-summer Scandinavian Tours & Dinner: The dinner will be held on Saturday, June 20, 2009 from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Lakeside Town Hall. The Windmill Open House will take place from 9:00 – 5:00 on Saturday only. We are looking for an additional refrigerator to be used at the Lakeside Town Hall for dinner preparation.

Other Old Business: None.

NEW BUSINESS

Communications: Membership renewals continue to come in.

Future program topic: The Board discussed possible future plans to provide a history of the Middle River Sanitarium. Harry, Irene, and Alice will follow up on several contacts.

General Meeting in June: The general meeting for June will be held on Friday, June 9th at 6:00 p.m. at the Lakeside Town Hall. (There will be a workday at Lakeside and at the Windmill earlier on this same day to prepare for the Midsummer Dinner and Tour.) Lila will call to reserve the town hall facility.

ADJOURNMENT:

Harry moved and Mary Ann seconded the motion to adjourn the meeting. We adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lila M. Ronn, Secretary

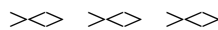
Area History:
No. 67

The following is the April image and text from our new **2009 OBHS History Calendar**.



4. Edward Niemi with the First Car in Maple. A 1912 International Harvester.

Maureen Hermanson wrote the following as a Corner School class assignment in 1955. "Grandpa had the first car in Maple. He got it in the year 1912. He ordered it from some place in the city. It came on a flat-car to the depot that is a little way off the main highway by Ed Niemi's store. The salesman came on the train so he could tell Grandpa how to start it and give him the keys. The car had two big wheels in the back and a couple of big ones in front to make it go. The salesman told him where the clutch, brake, shift, and gas pedal were. He told him how to crank the car to make it start. He also gave him the keys and then left because he had to go to catch his train. At first Grandpa drove the car on low because he didn't know how to steer it and there were only trails to drive on. Later he drove faster when he knew how to steer it. When he used to go down the country the children used to line up by the fences and say, "Here he comes!" The cows and horses used to be on the road when he came. They would run off as fast as they could." Ed was a Red & White general store merchant in the Maple village for over forty years. *(From a copy of a postcard photo in the Jim Pellman collection.)*



- NOTICES -

THANK YOUS & RECOGNITIONS: To those many who continue to donate toward Windmill paver memorials. To those who have paid their dues for 2009. Please check your membership cards for expiration date. To the many who have purchased our 2009 calendar. To **Larry Ronning** for recent membership renewal and for generous merchandise purchases.

CONGRATULATIONS: To the **Northwestern boys basketball team and coaches** on their trip to Madison and the State Tourn., where they fell just short in their opening game (25-1). To those responsible for the recent sale of the **Taco Plant in Poplar** to **Northland Foods of Superior**.

ENCOURAGEMENTS: To **Lorraine Korhonen**, and **Obie Saari** recovering, recent surgeries.

OUR SYMPATHY: To the family and friends of **Ailie Hakkila**, 90, late of Brule, who passed away on December 29th, and of **Hilda (Orava-Nykanen) Falk**, 84, longtime Maple resident, who died on February 21st. Also the family and friends of **Sonja Keup**, 36, of Poplar, who passed away Feb. 28th and of **Ronald "Bullcook" Johnson**, 61, of Oulu who died March 4th.

... and who have we missed or forgotten?

CALENDAR

April 6, Monday, 1. p.m. Archives Meets at Pellmans'. 6 p.m Windmill Comm. Eskolin House.

April 7, Tuesday. Spring General Elections. VOTE!

April 8, Wednesday, **5. p.m.** Next OBHS General Meeting, Superior Public Library. Tour of Carl Gawboy historical murals. *Note earlier time.* Pizza lunch.

April 9, Thursday, Passover.

April 12, Sunday, Easter.

April 20, Monday, 7 p.m. Meeting, Northern Lakes Archaeological Society., Superior Public Library. Program: "MP&L Legacy Program, Reservoir Lakes Collection." Mulhollands.

April 26, Sunday, 1 p.m. Douglas County Hist. Soc. Annual Meeting. Dennis Lamkin, Speaker.

May 10, Sunday. Mother's Day.

May 13, Wednesday, 6 p.m. OBHS Board Meeting. Eskolin House.

May 15, Friday. Deadline for June *OBHS News*.

June 18, Friday, 6.p.m. OBHS Gen. Meeting. Lakeside Town Hall. Workday for Midsummer-19th

OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY WEB SITE ON LINE

The Website Committee has been building up our Web site (www.oldbrule.org). Our thanks to Earl Granroth who continues to make regular updates, and to **Jon Winter** of **Winter Systems in Superior**, our Web host at no charge to us.

Anyone interested in joining the Old-Brule Heritage Society is encouraged to attend any of our meetings and programs. To join they may also contact any member or the President at the return address below, or our Treasurer, Ron Hendrickson, at the same address. Our annual dues are \$15.00 for individuals, and \$25.00 for families, payable at the time of our annual meeting in August. Higher levels of support are always welcome.

New Members and Visitors are Always WELCOME!

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