

OBHS News

Newsletter of the Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. ©2011

Founded in 1998 to Preserve and Share the History and Heritage of the Old-Brule Region.

Volume XIII, Issue 6

December 8, 2011

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alice Christensen, Amnicon, President
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THE OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY GENERAL Christmas MEETING

Wednesday, December 14, 2011, 6:00 p.m., at the Amnicon Town Hall

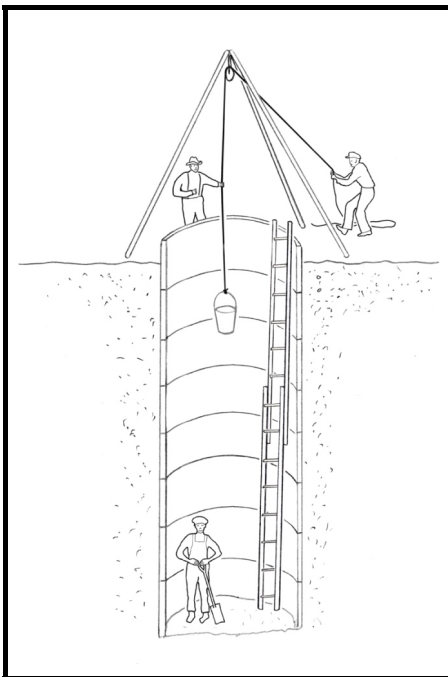
Program: Jim Pellman will give us a slide program on the 2012 Calendar, and a report on the historic Old-Brule Town Hall site in Maple, possible site for the Monticello School. Our business meeting will follow our traditional Christmas pot luck supper, and gift exchange. The gift exchange is voluntary, and the gifts of \$5 to \$10 in value are to be wrapped and marked "Man", "Woman" or "Either". Thanks to the Town of Amnicon for the use of their hall, and thanks to all who provide food, and refreshments to share.

All members and guests are welcome!

FROM OUR PRESIDENT:

Amnicon From the Beginning: a Window into the Past, was published last year as part of our Town of Amnicon Centennial Celebration. Sales of the book have been steady, and are being handled by the Old-Brule Heritage Society, through its members and at local business outlets, and by the Amnicon Volunteer

Fire Department, which generously divided the printed copies remaining after publication costs were recovered. Materials gathered in the writing have been entrusted by the committee to the OBHS Archive. Dennis Hill, local historian, Amnicon Town Board member and active Volunteer Fire Department member headed up the writing effort. Our deep thanks to this OBHS member. Among the interesting articles gathered was that which follows called *Hand Dug Wells*, by Fred J. Renman, whose family has long resided in the area, printed with his permission.



Many of the early homesteaders and farmers in our area had to dig wells by hand for their water supply. Digging a well by hand was a lot of work and could be dangerous due to the possibility of cave-ins, falling rocks or asphyxiation. They were often lined with stones or brick to keep them from collapsing and prevent contamination.

J. Fred Renman and his sons Ralph and Roy dug a well by hand on their farm at Berg Park using cement manhole rings for the well lining. They started out by standing the first ring vertically on top of the ground, and then they climbed inside and started digging the soil out from inside the manhole. The soil at Berg Park allowed them to dig under the bottom edge of the manhole ring, so it lowered itself

down the well as they dug deeper.

When the top edge of the ring got down to ground level, they stacked another ring on top of it and repeated

the process over and over until they had dug down into the water table. The manhole rings interlocked with each other, protecting them from cave-ins and sealed the well from contamination. There was no electricity at Berg Park yet so Ralph and Roy had to pump the water by hand. They learned first hand that dairy cows could easily drink ten to twenty gallons of water a day.

A Merry Christmas & Happy New Year to everyone.
President Alice

1998 to 2005, 2006 to 2011 LOCAL 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, to be completed very soon. Limited numbers of their 2005 calendar and earlier issues are still available. Please contact Janet Follis, P.O. Box 114, Brule, WI 54820, (715) 372-4948.

The 2011 Old-Brule Heritage Society History Photo Calendars are available at \$7.00 each. Other earlier OBHS calendars are also available at \$5.00 (2006 - 2009) & 2010 at \$6.00 in limited numbers. Poplar Hardware is also carrying them. 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. The 2012 Calendar will soon be available at \$8.00.

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 and interpreting documents and photos, storing records and creating databases. Our thanks to our loyal committee members and donors, 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. The next formal meeting will be on December 12, 2011. Please call 714-363-2549 to confirm meeting time and place.

**Unapproved GENERAL MEETING MINUTES
OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.
Brule Town Hall, October 12, 2011**

Refreshments: A light supper was served beginning at 6:00 p.m. Thanks to Minerva, Laila, and Mary Ann for providing beverages and for their kitchen preparation and cleanup. Remaining bake-sale items were served. Thanks to everyone who brought additional food and to Jim for his assistance and for setting up the Power Point program.

Program: Velma Doby presented a counterpart program to one she made in Finland this past summer for Kinnula Days. (Velma expressed appreciation to Shelli Meteraud and Jim for technical help.) OBHS members and many visitors, coming from as far as St. Paul, MN and Delafield, WI, enjoyed the talk and the pictorial history describing the experiences of Velma's ancestors as they immigrated to the United States. Velma's father settled in the Juntti area of Brule, and his brothers settled in Maple and in California. Velma related the stories of their extended families, work, and community life since that time. Thank you, Velma!

BUSINESS MEETING

CALL TO ORDER: President Alice Christensen called the meeting to order at 7:45 p.m.

MINUTES: Minerva moved to accept the minutes of the last General Meeting held on June 16, 2011, at the Lakeside Town Hall, as presented in the August *OBHS News*. Following a second by Audrey, these minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ron reported the following balances at the National Bank of Commerce in Poplar: Checking Account -- \$ 4,090.65 and Certificate of Deposit #1 -- \$ 5,678.72. Jim made a motion to approve this report and Nancy seconded the motion. The report was approved as presented.

OLD BUSINESS:

Davidson Windmill Committee Report:

Open House on September 17th: This was the last of the regularly scheduled summer open house and tour events. Dennis, Arlene, and Alice were hosts in the Eskolin House; Ron and Paul handled windmill tours.

Open House – Apple Festival Weekend: Thanks to the many OBHS volunteers who helped out with this three-day event. Ron reported that receipts from the bake sale and the tours totaled \$ 767.39. [Books- \$ 86.00; Merchandise - \$ 162.00; Donations - \$ 192.14; Bake Sale - \$ 291.25; and Pavers - \$ 46.00.]

Sidewalk: Alice noted to everyone in attendance that pavers are available for \$15.00. Anyone interested should contact a Board Member or get an order form online.

Memorial Tree: Nancy, Alice, and others have been working around the Memorial Tree Garden resulting in a more attractive area. Additional help is needed – please contact Alice.

ROW Strip donated from Town of Lakeside: Bill Anderson will incorporate this addition into a final survey.

Eskolin House:

Awning/canopy/entryway: All permits and approvals have been secured. Formal planning and design work needs to be addressed at a separate meeting. No action taken at this time.

Painting of Entrance: Alice has volunteered to paint the entrance door to match the trim.

Preservation of House Exterior: The Board decided at their September meeting “to maintain the logs of the Eskolin House by spraying them with a preservative”. This preservative will not change the color of the house. If at all possible, the first application should be completed this fall.

Taylor's Bridge Move: Thanks to the leadership of Ron and Dennis, the Bridge was moved last month. Ron reported that further work still needs to be done before the project is complete.

Windmill Committee: Paul made a motion to re-form the Windmill Committee. Following a second by Earl, the motion was passed. Earl suggested that the Board obtain names for this committee.

Archives Committee: The next meeting will be held at the Pellman residence at 1:00 p.m., on October 24, 2011. Anyone interested in working with this important group is welcome to attend.

Website Committee: Earl has order forms available. These forms can also be found on the OBHS website. Earl noted that when accessing the website, it may be necessary to hit the “refresh” button or a “circle with an arrow on it” in order to refresh the website information on your computer.

Publicity/Advertising Committee: Mary Ann reported that she had publicized the October 7-9 Open House activities in various publications including the *Northland Shopper* and the *Superior Telegram*.

Publications Committee:

Selection of content has been made for the 2012 Calendar. Mailings are going to area businesses.

Ron made a motion that space be allotted in the calendar for three individuals who made significant contributions to the move and relocation of the Taylor's Bridge: Mike Woodhull, Dean Amys, and Pete Waletzko. Following a second by Lila, the motion passed.

Jim expressed his intent to have the calendar ready by the December meeting. Thank you, Jim, for your many efforts in producing this anticipated calendar.

Jim moved that we increase the selling price of this calendar from \$ 7.00 to \$8.00. Following a second by Mary Ann, the motion passed.

100 additional brochures have been printed, which should last until we have updated ones available.

Brule History Research Group: Minerva reported that the group is all back home and actively working on the project.

Pollari Memorial Gift Committee: No additional report.

Membership Committee: Dues for 2012 continue to come in. Members are reminded to complete annual forms (August 1 – July 31) to report their volunteer hours. See Jim for the forms or check the website.

Monticello School:

This school is currently located on the late Walter Erkkila farmstead in Lakeside. Ruth Erkkila, representing the family, has donated this school to OBHS, which has provided temporary protection for the building while decisions are made regarding its future. Jan Conley, whose grandmother taught at this school, will be present at the November Board meeting to discuss her and her family's interest and support in preserving this school.

One important issue is that of a possible location. It was suggested that we centralize all of our buildings at one site. Another option has been presented by Jim, who has offered a one-acre parcel in Maple which is near Northwestern High School, as an ideal and attractive setting for this school. Eventually, there could be a museum located nearby. If there is general approval of this L-shaped property as a location site, he will see if he can get an easement to access it from adjoining property owners. It was decided that all interested OBHS members visit the Maple site on Sunday, October 23rd. The time is yet to be determined, but will be noted on our website as soon as possible.

Arnold Johnson Flour Mill: Thanks to Eddie and Arnold, the mill and all of its components are now temporarily stored at Eddie Walman's.

Update of Officer Job Descriptions: The most recent draft of the Officer Job Descriptions will be reviewed at an upcoming Board meeting.

Next Board Meeting: The next Board meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 16, 2011, at the Eskolin House. (This date has been changed from November 9 to November 16, in order to meet with Jan Conley.)

Next General Meeting: Our December meeting and annual pot-luck Holiday Dinner will be on Wednesday, December 14 at the Amnicon Town Hall, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Those who wish to participate in a gift exchange should bring a wrapped gift valued at \$5 - \$10, indicating if it is a unisex gift or one intended for either a man or woman.

Other Old Business:

Membership Drive: Dennis will be heading up a membership committee beginning after the holiday season.

Sympathy and Encouragement: Encouragement sent to Harry and Mary Wester and George Umolac.

NEW BUSINESS:

Donation of Brick: Dennis moved that OBHS purchase a brick recognizing the donation by Sean McKenzie of timber used to relocate the Taylor's bridge on our site. Shirley seconded the motion; it passed.

Recognition of the Davidson Windmill and Eskolin House on the Wisconsin State Register: It was suggested that we contact Amy Norlund with the State Historical Society to get assistance. Ruth Getz, from the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, is a contact to make to seek inclusion in next publication of the *Wisconsin Travel Guide*. Paul volunteered to follow up with these contacts.

ADJOURNMENT: Earl made a motion to adjourn the meeting, which Barbara seconded. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:05 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, 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, new stock caps, \$12, and tee shirts, any size, \$10, all proceeds going into the Windmill Fund. Sweat shirts are on sale. **SEE OUR WEB SITE (www.oldbrule.org) FOR CURRENT SALE ITEMS AND PRICES.** Our new vests are for sale for \$24.00.

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. Our book, *Wisconsin Far Northwest*, and Nan Wisherd's books, *Pathways* and *Echoes*, and Lakeside's *Sisu and Sauna*, and now **Amnicon's History book** 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 \$3.00 minimum. All items are also available for purchase at our meetings or by contacting an O-BHS member. Our new book, *Davidson Windmill History* by Jim Pellman and Gene Davidson is now available for \$8.00 (+\$2.00 shipping).

Unapproved BOARD MEETING MINUTES

OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY

Eskolin House, Town of Lakeside, November 16, 2011

Members Present: President Alice Christensen, 1st Vice-President Earl Granroth, 2nd Vice-President Brian Christensen, Treasurer Ron Hendrickson, Secretary Lila Ronn, Karin Colby, Paul Colby, Dennis Hill, Jim Pellman, Eddie Walman, and Nancy Wiitala.

Monticello School and Tour of the Rinnet & Pellman Properties in Maple

Jan and Dave Conley were present to express their support for the restoration of the Monticello School. (Jan's grandmother, Lillian Smith Fonger, was a teacher at this school.) Ensuing discussion included information about the history of the building, its current condition, and what might be needed to move it and repair it.

On October 23, Jim led a tour for interested OBHS members of the property he would deed to OBHS if plans were made to move Monticello School to this site. This land is located off Highway 2 in the Town of Maple, across the street from Finnworks, and adjacent to the Rinnet property. Jim noted the rich historic background of this land and of early discussions to seek the Rinnet House and property as a center for OBHS. At this time, however, the Monticello School Building could be conceived as a separate project. Jim, Paul, Dennis and Dave Conley will make arrangements to meet with Steve Rannenber to discuss the possibility of moving the Monticello School to this one-acre property and subsequent legal requirements.

BUSINESS MEETING

CALL TO ORDER: President Alice Christensen called the meeting to order at 5:25 p.m.

MINUTES: Following a review of the September 14, 2011 Board meeting minutes, published in the October *OBHS News*, Earl moved for approval. Nancy seconded the motion, which was passed.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Ron reported the following balances, effective October 31, 2011, at the National Bank of Commerce in Poplar: Checking Account – \$ 4,332.16; and Certificate of Deposit -- \$ 5,678.72. All bills have been paid, including the recently received \$10 fee statement from the State of Wisconsin for a Seller's Permit. Jim moved to accept the report as presented; Earl seconded the motion. The report was approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

Davidson Windmill Committee Reports:

Taylor's Bridge: Ron reported that the bank has been stabilized on the north side of the bridge. Boulders were moved for this purpose and a drain was installed. Brian Paulson donated and delivered railroad ties.

Bob Bender, Leo Sanda, Earl Tekippe, Jack Pank, and Ron have reattached the angle iron to the new replacement timber donated by Shawn McKenzie. Railroad ties were placed to allow backfill to secure a hand rail. Potholes were tinned up. Thanks to Earl T. for the use of his tractor and to Leo S. and Bob B. for their equipment used to move boulders. These three men donated significant time on the project. Paul made a motion, seconded by Earl to give each of them a choice of available clothing from the OBHS inventory. The motion passed.

Earl requested a photo of Taylor's bridge when it originally spanned Middle River for our OBHS website.

Eskolin House: Treating of the logs will be done in the spring. Alice asked about the possibility of protecting the front door with plastic to protect it from the elements during the winter.

Tours of the Eskolin House and Davidson Mill: The last scheduled tour of the season was completed during the Apple Festival Weekend. Activity and sales were similar to those of previous years.

Publicity/Advertising: Paul has contacted Colleen Kennedy from *Wisconsin Trails* to see what advertising might be available for OBHS. Because it appears that this resource may be too expensive for us to consider, Paul will check on Tour Guides that are published through the State of Wisconsin as an alternate source of publicity for us to consider. It was also suggested that we look at being included in a Minnesota tour guide.

Next Board Meeting: The next board meeting is scheduled to begin at 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 11, 2012. Location to be determined.

Next General Meeting: The next general meeting will be held at the Amnicon Town Hall on December 14, 2011. A pot-luck holiday supper will be served at 6:00 p.m., followed by the meeting and program. For those interested in exchanging Christmas presents, please bring a wrapped gift valued between \$5 - \$10, noting whether it is for a female, male, or suitable for either sex.

Membership: 2012 dues continue to come in.

NEW BUSINESS:

Taylor's Bridge Dedication and Inclusion in State and National Historic Registrations: There will be a dedication of the bridge in spring of 2012. Ron will check on steps to be done to include this bridge in the National and State Historic Registers. Ron will e-mail information to Earl that was included on the sign that was erected at its past site. Lila will edit existing information about Taylor's Bridge to begin developing signage for the bridge at its new location.

Eskolin House Pest Control: Alice expressed a need for OBHS to hire a professional service for pest control. Earl moved that Alice investigate various options and their costs. After a second by Ron, the motion passed.

Future Programs: Jim will present the December program, highlighting the 2012 Calendar. Suggestions for future programs included Herb Wagner and Larry Luukkonen. Additional recommendations could be requested during a General Meeting.

Correspondence: Kay Johnson, County Supervisor, passed on to OBHS an old article about the Windmill (found somewhere in the Courthouse), written by John Bardon in 1935. Thank you, Kay.

Memorial List: OBHS has not published a formal memorial list for the past year. Lila will review all newsletters and compile a list to be reviewed by all before publication. Jim noted that, in addition, member volunteer hours and certificates for the past year have not been noted. Members need to submit outstanding records for their volunteer hours from August 1, 2010 – July 31, 2011 to Jim as soon as possible.

Map of Old-Brule for Eskolin House: After discussion, Ron made a motion that we obtain a "fairly good-sized map", perhaps 16" x 24", of pre-1900 Old-Brule, showing the county and its early four towns. This map would be hung somewhere in Eskolin House. It would be framed and have non-glare glass. After a second by Jim, the motion was passed.

Membership Drive: Dennis is heading this effort, and has begun writing a letter which would be mailed to residents of one town at a time, followed by a corresponding general meeting at that same site.

ADJOURNMENT: Nancy moved to adjourn the meeting; Earl seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned at 6:22 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Lila M. Ronn, Secretary

Area History:

No. 81

The following text and image are from our 2011 OBHS History Calendar:

12. December: **Douglas County Rural Youth Group Skaters c. 1943.** This youth group was for northern Douglas County rural youth after the 4H age, managed out of the same office in the County Courthouse as 4H. This troupe was on a skating outing to the Superior Curling Club (located then near the base of the Belknap viaduct). Laila Ronkainen (now Magnuson), a 1947 graduate of Waino High School, related that she was the youngest person there, tagging along after her musical brother Ernie, four years her senior who later took the name Ronn. Communities represented here were Brule (Waino), Maple, Cloverland, and most heavily Amnicon (Wentworth).



Back Row: Bud Levine, Dwayne Linden, Doris Ellenson, Bernice Eckman (Edquist?), Ken Britz, Dave Erickson.

Middle Row: Bud Linden, Virginia Ukkola, Irene Winkka, Laila Ronkainen, LaVerne Simons, Ernie Ronkainen (Ronn), Ralph Hendrickson, Bob Hendrickson.

Front Row: Howard Christensen, Elsie Saalasti?, Vernon Roos, Joyce Compton, Doris Christensen, George Nykanen, Harding Christensen.

Irene (Winkka) Brazill collection. Identifications contributed by Irene Brazill, Laila Magnuson, Shirley Umolac, and Ron Hendrickson.

- NOTICES -

THANK YOUS & RECOGNITIONS: To **Teddy Meronek** for her generous gift to the Taylor's Bridge Fund. Teddy is a member of the DCHS Board, and works at the Superior Public Library. To all the **Business Donors** listed in our new 2012 Calendar. To **Mary Jean (Doherty, Blue) O'Neil** for her historical Poplar photos.

CONGRATULATIONS: To members **Lora & Lee Olson** on their recent successful safari to South Africa.

OUR ENCOURAGEMENT & SYMPATHY: Encouragement in health issues to the mother of member **Brian Paulson**; and to **Jeff Hermanson**. Sympathy to family and friends of the many who have recently passed away:

Dennis J. "Denny Bear" White, 60, Maple, of mesothelioma, Dec. 3, in Essentia Health St. Mary's, Duluth ; **Elizabeth "Betty" A. Ford**, 80, formerly of Brule, Nov. 27, in Bullhead City, Ariz. of Parkinson's disease; **Jim Malosky**, 82, long time UMD coach, Dec. 4, in Minneapolis; **Harry R. Nummi**, 92, Superior jeweler & resident of Billings Park, Dec. 1; **Vernon James Hoopman**, 53, South Range, Nov. 21, at Essentia-St. Mary's Hospice, Duluth; **Ronald Gramer**, 69, Maple, Nov. 22 at his hunting camp near Bardon Creek; **Eunice L. (Olson) Alholm**, 74, Cloverland, Nov. 26; **Jeno Paulucci**, entrepreneur, 93, Duluth, four days after his wife; **Daniel E. Collins**, 77, Iron River, Nov. 22; **Denise M. Hudson**, 57, of Bennett & Superior, Nov. 16; **Lawrence H. "Larry" Denston**, 86, Brule, Nov. 9, at Essentia Health-St. Mary's Medical Center, Duluth; **Helen V. Wilgren**, 93, Madison, Wis., formerly of Maple & Superior, Nov. 12; **Robert "Bob" Wilfred Link**, 72, of Minong, Wis., Nov. 2; **Bernice Babcock**, 96, Maple, in hospice at Essentia Health-St. Mary's Medical Center, Duluth, Nov. 2; **Marjorie D. "Marge" (Ronchi) Larson**, 69, Wentworth & Iron River, Oct. 30 of cancer; **George Richard Johnson**, 76, Oulu & Maple, in Miller-Dwan Medical Center, Duluth, Oct. 7. May these, our dear friends and neighbors rest in peace.

... and who have we missed or forgotten?

RETURN ADDRESS:

OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY, INC.

Post Office Box 24

Maple, WI 54854

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 Board 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 annual meeting in August. Higher levels of support are always welcome.

New Members and Visitors are Always WELCOME!

CALENDAR.

December 12, Monday, 1 p.m. Archive Committee work session, Pellmans', followed by holiday break.

December 14, Wednesday, 6 p.m. OBHS General Meeting, Christmas meeting, Amnicon Town Hall. Jim Pellman presents 2012 Calendar & explains the history of the Old Brule Town Hall site. Pot luck supper & Gift Exchange.

December 24, Saturday. Christmas Eve.

December 31, Saturday. New Year's Eve.

January 11, Wednesday. OBHS Board Meeting. Place & location to be announced.

January 20, Friday. Deadline for contributions to the February *OBHS News*.

OLD-BRULE HERITAGE SOCIETY WEB SITE ON LINE

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

Thanks to Earl and Jon.