

OBHS News

Newsletter of the Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. ©2000
Founded in 1998 to Preserve and Share the Heritage of the Old-Brule Region.

Volume II, Issue 1

February 1, 2000

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jim Pellman, Maple, President

Larry Luostari, Cloverland, 1st V.P.

Chuck Zosel, Lake Nebagamon., 2nd V.P.

Hope Swenson, Lakeside, Secretary

Alice Christensen, Amnicon, Treasurer

Velma Doby, Iron River

Jerry Fechtelkotter, Poplar

Audrey Hakkila, Poplar

Paul Marvin Hakkila, Maple

Marvin Haukkala, Maple

Jackie Plunkett, Maple

Eddy Walman, Maple, alt

NEXT MEETING/PROGRAM FEBRUARY 9TH, 7 PM AT BRULE,

We will hold our next meeting at the Brule Town Hall on Wednesday, February 9, at 7 p.m. At our meeting we had hoped to have **Lawrence Berube** speak to us about his experiences as guide, etc. on the Brule. He, it turns out, will not be available, so at quite short notice we had asked **Mike Denny** to show us his slides, and to speak on early Brule, and to talk about his colorful grandfather, **Henry Denny**, local businessman and guide on the Brule for years. Mike consented with help from his sister, but he now may have an unexpected conflict with classes. We are intent on having a Brule River and Town theme at this program, and will continue with alternate plans if necessary. Anyone with old photographs or other materials about Brule who is willing to share them for the evening is asked to bring them along, and if they prefer to protect the originals, your president can quickly make copies for the evening. We will bring the stands made for the **Tony Gowin** concert late last summer.

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

Change into the new millennium is a challenge. Writing this strange date, 2000, forces me to think about time and change. Years ago I calculated I would be an ancient 52 and then shortly 53 when the new millennium arrived. But how quickly those years went by. Yesterday, in 1965 I was 18, and today I'm 53. What happened to the time between?

Careful reflection shows time filled with schooling, military service, creative work and struggle, moves from place to place, the sharing of outdoor adventures with father, friends, brother and nephews... and the repeated loss of loved ones. My path through the forces that have shaped our lives collectively since 1965 is unique, yet it has been shared, always by a changing circle around me. Local history is about these unique selves and these changing circles.

I was wondering how I might inspire our members to begin to write the history of their own lives. As I was thinking about this Nancy Moreland happened to request a copy of a translation I had

made of a letter John Karvala [later Carvala] wrote to a Superior based Finnish language newspaper in 1939, recently printed in the Finnish American Reporter. Carvala was 76 at that time over 60 years ago, a full life in those days. Fortunately the fiftieth anniversary of pioneer settlement in the Old-Brule area was to be celebrated among the Finns at the Brule Coop Park, and Kalle Aine of Superior, and others coaxed old settlers to put down their experiences for the sake of the young, and, actually, for the sake of us alive these 60 years later...for the sake of our history they became witnesses. I have decided to include Karvala's story as an example to inspire us. He looked with wise eyes and knew how to edit. He had an interesting sense of what was important.

Not everyone is a writer; not everyone keeps a daily journal, but it is said that the people from this time have lived through a period in history with more change than at any other time. Each one of us carries evidence of the magnitude of this change. To have witnessed change we need not have lived the 119 years

of the woman who just died having been the oldest person alive. Each of our lives is a part of the story of our world, country, our state, our communities; and the recollections we might have of our communities or of our parents and grandparents and of their stories are irreplaceable parcels and perspectives on events. O-BHS needs to organize the sharing of these experiences.

Some have been administrators, others possessed technical skills and insights. Some have

been woodsmen or farmers or they have known farmers and a rural life style that is in danger of being totally eclipsed. We need to reveal these ways of life, these life styles. The young will need to see how it was and is that together we have successfully lived. Let us be the witnesses, and find the witnesses, for our times.

Jim Pellman, Maple (715)363-2453 or E-mail: <musketeer6@juno.com>.

^^^^^^

JOHN CARVALA, Maple, Wisconsin.

A translation by Jim Pellman of John Carvala's article on his early years in Maple, published July 27, 1939, in *Työväen Osuustoimintalehti [Workers' Cooperative Builder]*:

Events in The Life of a Maple Pioneer

I was born in Lappajärvi, Vaasa province, November 7, 1863. On April 19, 1883 I left my home parish of Karvala village for America on a ship of the Allan Line. The trip over the Atlantic took 19 days. On May 4 I got to Hancock, on Copper Island. I worked for a short year in the Copper Falls copper mine, by name. Then for two summers I was at work in Canada building a new railroad. In the winter I was in Duluth and in late summer I was in Superior when I stopped for the first time in a shop there. Newly arriving Finnish people were shopping there. For this reason it was called "Northern Boys' Shop," where Antti Markanen was clerk.

In Minnesota in Carlton county I had 80 acres of land where I worked. In winter my neighbor Isaac Aninias "turned my antlers" toward driving cross ties to the Thompson station stop. In the year 1887 I sold the land I owned to Erkki Hiuka, and in October I took a homestead in Douglas County, Wisconsin, which was near the Section mark: Section 10, Range 11, Township 48. The point where one needed to go to the neighbors, was at this time Section 6. In that township in those years were Heikkurainen and his wife Sophia, J. Rautio and Antti Koukkula.

In Rautio's boat we three, myself, H. Anttila and P. Heikura left for Duluth to look for winter necessities. We secured 3/4 of a ton of wheat and other supplies. Rain and wind much impeded us. The trip took a week's time. Finally in the mouth of the Poplar River I got drenched. I worked to get to know my land until a hindering snow came.

Then I went to Thompson, Minnesota, where I worked, from where I came back in the month of February. At a train stop called Midland I bought a pair of skis. From town again I made the trip back to my homestead. We began building a log cabin on my land. P. Heikkurainen handled the other end of the crosscut saw and I got roof boards for my new log cabin.

With homesteader Tom's horse from Duluth over the ice of Lake Superior I consented to fetch an oven and its accessories. Still there was a 6 mile tobaggan trip and a great part of that was quite trackless and furthermore was over the bluffs of the Middle, Poplar and Bardon Rivers.

On election day in Poplar snow was as high as the fences.

In the spring of 1888 Henry Anttila and I fetched three cows from Thompson country. It was a type of raft, on which I came onto the Superior side, across the bay. Getting to Heikkurainen's I made a pile of evergreen sprigs for my cows.

Then in mid-September when Henry Anttila's wife gave birth to Willie afterward she went to convalesce at my log cabin. Willie Anttila was the first Finnish-American to be born in Maple.

In mid-September in the year 1888 with map and compass I made a path to Maple. Later in that year I opened the kind of trail that allows a sleigh to pass. Until then everything had to be carried in on one's back. At last I supplied? to Erkki Kirgas 100 pounds of flour [meal] and a large hardwood wash tub [*tampun*].

Erick Saari had the first time brought from Maple a

pulling ox into the country, as at my log cabin were Lappajarvi boys, Matti Hyytinen, John Loukola, Heikki Lammi and John Vanhala [Lukkarila], who aided in the road building.

When I got the road, though poor, indeed it made me feel wonderful, as the pressure is released when one severs the straps from the heart and shoulders.

In the year 1888 oxen were already turning the soil and doing other tasks.

Forest creatures were many, as were predators and pests, about which many stories were told. They perhaps nowadays seem to many to be only myths.

In 1889 on the 22nd of April, I got married to Anna Leinonen, who was born in Kemi on July 7th, 1861. My wife had learned how to shoot a firearm. On the path leading to my neighbor Abraham Harju a porcupine came writhing toward my wife. Now my

wife came asking for the firearm. When she shot that porcupine the bowels came out and still its legs tried to come towards my wife.

It deserves to be mentioned that in the year 1889 already on the 15th of April wind swayed the hay and leaves were on the trees. In the country there were no axe marks except on so called "section lines," even though the lands were taken from the government.

Then when the railroad companies' lands went to the government many Finns and other nationalities came unto the land to live.

Socially (In affiliation) I belong to the Apostolic-Lutheran congregation, which already in 1888 began its activities and shared the instruments of grace

Finance

Memberships, Donations and Historical Magnets

We have been selling historical magnets for a few months now in support of our programming and projects. Hopefully we will also be able to grow the invested funds that will eventually support our activities. Besides the startup donations from the **Town of Maple** and the **Corner School Reunion Committee**, it is gratifying to see memberships coming in on a regular basis for which we thank all of you. We enclose a list of our current membership. You will note we have two columns which will be marked by our Treasurer to indicate what her records show regarding your dues status for 1999 and 2000. Our membership thus far is divided into individuals and families. Total person by person membership has now risen to about 75 people, not counting children. We will continue to try, through this newsletter, our programming and eventually our website, to reach those with interest in joining and supporting our history efforts. You should find a signed membership card for the year 2000 enclosed with this newsletter if you are paid up.

Besides this income we have been very successful in selling many of the history photo magnets. Themes thus far are *the Davidson Windmill*, *the Bong P-38*, *the Waino Pioneer Chapel*, and now *the Lundberg Home* in Poplar. We have articles on both of the latter two designs in this newsletter. **Hope Swenson** has been doing a wonderful job as chair of the committee handling selection, design, production and sales of the magnets. Please contact her at 364-2296 with orders and ideas. We thank her for her hard work. Price still \$1.

We would like to recognize the donation of **Mr. Dale Decker** of Herald, California who sent us \$25.00 in the name of **Jackie Plunkett** whose vital genealogical help he deeply appreciated.

O-BHS Scholarship Fundraising

We are looking ahead to holding fundraisers for the sake of our annual scholarship which will be available again this year. Eventually we would like to raise the amount above the \$200 we now give. Ideas thus far are silent auctions in conjunction with our programs/meetings. We are looking for other ideas and scholar candidates. See **Kathy Matushak** at the High School to apply.

History Sunday and Quarterly Meeting with DCHS Cancelled At Gordon-Wascott Historical Society

This weekend at the scheduled monthly History Sunday Program (January 23rd) we would have had our joint meeting with DCHS and with the other historical societies in the county. It appears winter has thinned the ranks in southern Douglas county as well as here and the event had to be cancelled. As the DCHS reorganizes after its move to the beautiful Old Post Office in Superior, and after the departure of Director **Rachael Martin**, it has rededicated itself to its county-wide mission. It is looking for more opportunities to interact with the other historical groups in the county. Your president is their treasurer for two more months. I would encourage anyone with the right circumstances, interest, and time to spare to make contact with DCHS and offer his or her support. They are particularly in need of volunteers to fill time slots to help keep open their office, exhibit space and archives. Their new address is 1401 Tower Ave., Room 10, phone 392-8449. College student **Chantal Norrgard** is now their only paid help working 6 to 10 hours a week.

CESA/Web Site Update

Our efforts to create a website have taken a slight detour into the CESA program now being developed in the Northwestern, District of Maple schools. Your president, **Nancy Moreland**, **Mike Denny**, and **Michelle Suo** continue to meet to prepare to use the computer medium and its tools to create a "virtual museum." High School staff members **Don Anderson** and **Pat Luostari** have become involved in a partnership of community, and students and staff in

the school district. The initial topic of research will be former schools and school sites within the Northwestern district. In a separate issue, as policy is set, it appears the District will be permitting the linkage of the O-BHS proposed site with the school district, something we have long anticipated. We shall keep you posted.

Site Report

We continue to keep our eyes open for the right prospects for a fixed site for our group. What we have called from time to time, the "Heritage Park Site," at the junction of Highways 2 and County Road F may not be a site for our future archives, but its importance to the history of Old-Brule makes some type of marker or memorial there important. V.P. **Chuck Zosel** has contacted the School District which owns an acre in the NW corner of the site and there is promise that with sufficient preparation and planning this site may again serve the public as it did for over fifty years dating from near the beginning of Old-Brule in 1889 when it held Old-Brule's Town Hall, a jail and a school. (We are looking for pictures from this time.) In later years, after Old-Brule's division in 1907, it held Maple's Town Hall until the 1940's. The last building on the site was torn down in 1957, having suffered much indignity. This Town Hall-Maple School combination went up about 1921 just before the formation of the Town of Cloverland out of northern Maple and Brule, both of which had fronted Lake Superior.

For the year 2000 historical calendar in support of publication of the Brule History Research Group's efforts contact **Janet Follis**, P.O. Box 114, Brule, WI 54820 or phone **715-372-4948**.

Area History: No. 2

by Minerva Johnson © 2000

Waino is located in the northern portion of the modern Town of Brule. Although it never had official State governmental status it was a unique settlement of Finnish culture straddling the Brule River from about four to seven miles north of the unincorporated village of Brule situated near the Northern Pacific railroad station. The Brule townsite was established in the early 1890s with the logging boom in the region. Waino, in its heyday, had its own Federal post office, store and other commercial and social enterprises supporting its immigrant farming population. The O-BHS in its historical picture magnet series has chosen to include a photograph of the Waino Pioneer Chapel. This landmark is a symbol of the sustaining faith of these settlers in the Waino part of Old-Brule. Located on what is now called Tuura Road in the modern Town of Brule, the building is close to the Everest Cemetery where many of the early settlers and their descendants are buried. Finnish settlers were predominantly Lutheran in faith as the Lutheran

Church was the Finnish State Church, meaning it had (and still has) official status with the Finnish government and its clergy was responsible for much of the official record keeping in the nation. In America, what were only sectarian splits under the one Lutheran fold in Finland, became completely separate worshiping communities under America's separation of church and state. The Suomi Synod which Minerva refers to below retained the closest ties to the Finnish State Church. Other divisions in the Lutheran fold in America were the National Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Laestadian or Independent Apostolic Lutheran Churches. Minerva (Ruska) Johnson is a long time resident of the Brule/Waino area, and is an active member of the Brule History Research Group. Many of the ministers she refers to attained prominence in the ELCA. Rev. Walter Kukkonen, a local product, taught at the Chicago Lutheran Theological Seminary. ---J.P.

Early settlers in the Waino area, met in homes for church services. By 1890, it was voted to build a church. Gust Koski donated the land and Axel Back (Beck) offered to buy a bell if a steeple was built. The church was built of hand hewn boards as there were no sawmills yet.

The congregation was accepted into the Suomi Synod on November 8, 1893 as the *Niemen Evangelilutherilainen Kirkko* [in English: Niemi (=cape or headland) Evangelical Lutheran Church]. Circuit preachers came to Brule by train and walked to Waino. Lay preachers got training in Duluth so they could baptize babies and hold services. Two of these were Jacob Koski and Gabriel Bikki.

The church bell rang on Saturday night if there were services on Sunday. Valentine Aho, the official bell ringer, rang the bell once for every year of a person's age after a funeral. The bell rang an alarm once during a forest fire.

A congregational meeting March 8, 1917, decided to pay the preacher \$6.00 a month. Offering

books show the average offering 60 cents on a Sunday.

Services and confirmation were continued until World War I. After that they were held as could be arranged. In 1946, Rev. Walter Kukkonen held a confirmation class.

In 1968 it was voted to close services and call it Waino Pioneer Chapel. It is used mainly for funerals and community events.

Some ministers were: Pastors Huotari, Tenner and Grandholm. Then H. Sarvela in 1906, J. Mänttä 1907-1908, T. Keränen 1909, A. Riipa 1910, M. Pesonen 1911, S. V. Kava 1912-1913. Others who served: Anton Korhonen, Antti Lepisto, Sr., John Wargelin, Kalle Esonen, Eino Tuori, Evert Torkko, Walter Kukkonen, Arnold Stadius, Henry Aukee.

On August 6, 1993, Eero Huovinen, Bishop of Helsinki and Rev. Olaf Rankinen, President of Suomi Free Conference of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, were among well wishers at a centennial celebration.

The Story of the Lundberg Home in Poplar

by Marion Lundberg Olson © 2000

Marion Olson, a friendly face at the National Bank of Commerce in Poplar for many years, and daughter of Hulda (Jones) and William Lundberg, gives this summary of the Lundberg house, longtime landmark on the road to the Poplar Dam.

My father, William Lundberg, came to the United States at the age of 13 to live with his Uncle John M. Peterson. His uncle owned a brick factory which was located at the site of the present Poplar Skating Rink. It was here the bricks for the home were made. The brick factory went out of business and Dad got the bricks for his wages.

The outer walls were made of three layers of brick, and some of the inner walls were also made of brick. The window sills of sandstone came from the Amnicon Falls Quarry. The house was lathed and plastered for the price of \$25.00, and room and board. There are four bedrooms upstairs. A stairway on this floor led to the attic. On the main floor are one bedroom, a kitchen and an "L" shaped dining and living room. Originally, there was a spiral stairway to the second floor, but this was later replaced by a direct stairway.

His uncle wanted William to have a big family so Dad made it big!

The house was originally built on cedar posts. A basement was added later. The original beams and joist are still in place in the basement. This additional area allowed room for wood and storage, a furnace area and water pump system and battery storage. A 32 volt D.C. light system was installed. A gas driven generator recharged the batteries. There was storage for 100 or more jars of canned goods such as meats, berries and vegetables.

Hulda Jones, the second white child born in Poplar, and William Lundberg were married in 1908. Ten children were born to them in the family home. As I write this in January, 2000, six of these ten children are still living. Elsie Erbentraut, a daughter of Hulda and William, now lives in the family home.

Today, the Lundberg family home and farm is owned by Dr. William Lundberg, a grandson. He and his wife Shirley are the third generation of Lundbergs to own the home.

Anyone interested in joining the Old-Brule Heritage Society is encouraged to attend any of our meetings and programs. To join they may contact any member or the President at the return address below, or call him at (715) 363-2453, our Secretary, **Hope Swenson**, at 364-2296, or our Treasurer, **Alice Christensen**, at 364-2535. Our annual dues are \$15.00 for individuals, and \$25.00 for families, due at the time of our annual meeting in September. Higher levels of support are also available.

New Member: **Delores Gunderson**, Duluth. WELCOME! And thanks to all of you for your many membership renewals. See our full membership list this issue. We wish stricken member **Cassius Christensen** a speedy and full recovery. He and Treasurer Alice have been fine hosts at several of our committee meetings, and he has been part of the crew that mailed out this newsletter in the past.

Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc.

11221 E. U.S. Highway 2

Maple, WI 54854