

OBHS News

Newsletter of the Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc. ©2023
Founded in 1998 to Gather, Preserve and Share the History and Heritage of the Old-Brule Region.

Volume XXVII, Issue 6

November 12, 2025

Board Of Directors

Jim Mattson, President
Jackie Plunkett, Vice-President
Donna Bergsten, Poplar, Secretary
Ron Hendrickson, Parkland, Treas.

Bruce Bergsten, Poplar
Basil Edgette, Lake Nebagamon
Roger Johnson, Lakeside
Brian Paulson, Poplar

Bruce Carlson
Mary Ann Gronquist, Parkland
Jim Pellman, Maple, Alt



Christmas on the Prairie

Come join us for our Annual Christmas Potluck, entertainment and meeting
at 6:00 pm on Monday, December 8!

John Agacki will be there to serenade us with Christmas melodies.

In addition to our music, Miranda from Northern Spotlight Theater
will bring us back to an earlier time, when she reads to us about
a Laura Ingalls Wilder Christmas

From the President

Volunteers have been busy this fall working on several Old Brule projects. At this time much of the outside work has been done on the Blueberry Depot. New siding has been installed on the bottom of the structure. The top portion is ready for painting next spring. Considerable work has also been done on the interior of the depot.

Much of the windmill restoration has been finished. Volunteers have been busy setting up a rock wall and providing better drainage near the windmill.

I encourage people to stop by and see the work that has been done on both the windmill and the depot. Next year we will have open house events so you can see the inside work that has been done.

Next year we will focus on doing repair work on the Eskolin House. The outside walls need caulking and preservative treatment applied. We have been cleaning and organizing the items inside the Eskolin House. We have an updated inventory of materials located at the Eskolin House.

At Monticello School and the Research Center/office electrical work has been done and work is continuing installing a heating system. We have a new "Porta Potty" at the school site.

The Archives Committee continues sorting through documents. Items are being scanned and inventories made which will in the future enable easier retrieval by computer for researchers interested in our Old Brule history.

We have been very busy working on the above-mentioned projects. We ask for donations to help us to continue working on these various projects. We now have donation forms that allow donors to select a particular area to make a donation. You can pick one category, or you may select several areas or the general fund to make your donation. Your donation will be confidential unless you specify otherwise. Thank you for your continued support!

James Mattson, President

**Unapproved General Meeting Minutes of the *October 13, 2025*
Old-Brule Heritage Society ~ Amnicon Town Hall**

A ***Thank You!*** goes out to Merlin Anderson, Bong American Legion post in Poplar for his introduction of our speakers, and Clint Mattson, Glen Erickson and Ryan Jost of the Bong Center for their presentations of their time spent in Viet Nam!

BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting was called to order at 7:50 p.m. by President Jim Mattson.

Minutes of the August meeting were approved as printed in September newsletter by Basil Edgette, seconded by Brian Paulson. Motion passed. Correspondence.: The Wisconsin Magazine. Donna Bergsten reported that a Board Handbook was found in the archives and we are planning to develop a new handbook.

Treasurer's report was distributed and explained by Ron Hendrickson. Motion by Dennis Hill, seconded by Basil Edgette to accept treasurer's report. Motion Passed. Ron also explained how this was one of the most profitable weekends for us.

President's report: Jim Mattson is looking for volunteers to sign up for committee positions. He would like to have each member who is volunteering their time, to please fill out the volunteer hours form. These hours are used for statistics when applying for grants. Please send your time to Donna. Another priority will be to update the membership lists and dues. Jim M. stated that with all of the projects going on, the Eskolin has been put on the back burner, but that there are a few issues that need to be addressed. The house needs caulking and wood sealing, along with closing some the openings in the building. Jim M would like to get the finance committee together soon to over the budget. The research center/office is another priority. Donna Bergsten reported that Troy Follis will be done with electrical work

Committee Report:

Archive: Donna Bergsten reported that the committee is still scanning and indexing items in our collection. We have finished going through the items from the Carlson Safe, but still need to scan these items. We are still looking for additional accession papers for items in our collection. We are still accepting items for our collection. We have gone through the calendars and have put together about 15 packets and have contacted several organizations asking if they want copies.

Website: Donna Bergsten is to meet with Dede Paquette to finalize the web site. Pictures need to be added to the site.

Membership: There are 76 memberships and memberships are coming in for 2026.

Monticello Project: The electrical work is basically done, until after insulation and sheet rock. We have contacted Joe Grube to do dirt work to set the biffy.

Windmill & Grounds: Plunkett's showed up and on the 2nd floor of windmill from "post powder beetle" tracings, It will cost \$199 in the fall and spring to rid the windmill of the beetle. They are proceeding. Ron Hendrickson described how grist stones have different patterns on the stone for grinding different grades of flour. Ron will talk with Stack Bros. to set the stone on display. Stock Bros. also have to finish some tin work on the roof. There is also low voltage lighting installed.

Eskolin House: As mentioned earlier, there are some fixes that need to happen. Also, the house needs a good cleaning. Plunkett's now have a key for the house. If we have a critter problem, with our payment plan, we can call for them to come out.

Blueberry Depot: We have a work day set up for Wednesday. Plus, Ron Hendrickson has contacted a painter for the upper two-thirds of the depot, but he cannot guarantee to do it this year. Cost will be \$2200 (we already have the paint).

Merchandise: Donna Bergsten, Mary Ann Gronquist and Marilyn Pank did clothing inventory. Jim Mattson and Donna did book inventory. Inventory sheets were passed out. Discussion of Davidson Windmill book. Ron Hendrickson motioned that we have 10 books printed, seconded by Mary Ann Gronquist. Discussion: Donna Bergsten suggested that we only have 5 books printed because we are looking at updating the book. Motion passed with Donna's amendment.

Pollari Map: Dennis Hill has declined to be on the committee. He did state that the project was to start with a map and then possibly proceed to a book. Discussion to get the project moving forward. Marilyn Pank has provided a map with some schools already listed.

By-laws: Donna Bergsten listed the Housekeeping items:

- Change wording: donator to donor
- With combination of 1st and 2nd Vice Presidents, change positions from eleven (11) to ten (10)
- With combination of types/classes of membership, change number from six (6) to three (3)
- Change the membership deadline date from November 1 to December 31.
- Add Section 3. Financial Donations: Financial donations given to OBHS shall be handled in the following manner:
 - Undesignated Donations - Financial donations that are undesignated by the donor(s) shall be deposited in the general account. The Board of Directors at their Board meeting and/or the membership at a general membership meeting shall decide upon the use of these undesignated funds.
 - Designated Donations - Designated donations shall state the area(s) where the donor desires the funds to be used. The donor may select more than one area and the specific amounts from their donation for each area if multiple areas are chosen.

November 2025

- Multiple areas for donations to OBHS are: Windmill, Depot/Sauna, Eskolin House/Bridge Fund, Research Center, Monticello School or general fund. The Board of Directors may designate additional areas for donation at their discretion.

Motioned by Mary Ann Gronquist to accept the changes to the by-laws, seconded by Bruce Bergsten. MP

Discussion of donation form drafted. Please add telephone number to form.

Safe Deposit Box: Jim Mattson has inventoried the box and there is room for more important papers/

Fundraising: Basil Edgette brought up the idea of having an event at Kro-Bar, possibly with Steve Solkela, spaghetti and no door prizes, to raise money for the Monticello project. Keep it simple. Discussion of refrigerator from Dustin Soyring. This was tabled to the Executive Board Meeting.

Unfinished Business:

Keys: Jim Mattson is still in the process of keeping track of our keys.

Calendar: Donna Bergsten drafted a calendar for 2026 to plan and track our upcoming events.

Publicity: Donna Bergsten drafted a listing of our publicity outlets and is asking Mary Ann Gronquist to update.

New Business:

100th Anniversary of President Coolidge coming to Brule: Donna Bergsten was approached with possibility of OBHS being on a committee to put together celebration for 2028. Interest in participation was noted. It was recommended to contact Douglas County Historical Society. It was suggested to develop a booklet for sale.

Duluth Superior Outdoor Painters contacted OBHS to see if they could paint at the Windmill. They will be there on October 18 (rain date: Oct 19). Jim Pellman suggested that we put out a press release on this.

Maria Lockwood – Donna Bergsten asked if she would like to do an article on the Monticello School and Research Center for the newspaper. We will be in contact.

Lightning Rod for Windmill: Dennis Hill is concerned that we need a lightning rod for the Windmill. Ron Hendrickson will check with Stack Bros. . Dennis would also like for us to check into increasing insurance from \$100,000 to \$150,000.

Christmas Party: Mary Ann Gronquist asked about potluck meal for our party. Yes, we will do a meal. She also asked about entertainment. Miranda from Northern Spotlight Theatre will be coming. Mary Ann is wondering if we should have John Agacki come also.

WI Historical Society books – Mary Ann Gronquist is wondering what we should do with the abundance of books that we have from the Wisconsin Historical Society – Wisconsin Finns, Wisconsin Norwegians, Roots? Can we donate to Oulu Cultural Center? Ron Hendrickson will check with Oulu Cultural Center.

Upcoming Dates:

Board Meeting: November 10 at 6:00 p.m. at Amnicon Town Hall.

General Meeting: December 8 at 6:00 pm at Amnicon Town Hall

Program: Christmas party

Sympathy and Encouragements: Dennis Hill reminded us to make sure that the person is OK with publishing this.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Donna Bergsten, secretary

Old-Brule Heritage Society

Unapproved Minutes for the November 10, 2025, Board Meeting Old-Brule Heritage Society ~ Amnicon Town Hall

The November 10, 2025, meeting was called to order by President Jim Mattson at 6:01 p.m.

Roll call was taken Jim Mattson, Jackie Plunket, Ron Hendrickson, Brian Paulson, Mary Ann Gronquist, Basil Edgette, Dennis Hill, Bruce and Donna Bergsten.

Motion to accept the minutes of the September meeting as printed by Basil Edgette, seconded by Brian Paulson. Motion passed. Correspondence: magazine *Minnesota meetings & events* was received.

Treasurer's report. Ron Hendrickson passed around the report. Motion to accept the Treasurer's report by Brian Paulson, seconded by Basil Edgette. Motion passed.

President's Report:

- Jim Mattson is looking for people to be on the various committees.
- Eskolin House – Jim Mattson and Donna Bergsten inventoried the sale items in the storage room, put together about 17 packets of our calendars and disposed of the remaining. The inside needs cleaning should only take about 1-1 ½ hours. With this freed up space, some of the artifacts can be moved/stored at the Eskolin House instead of taking space in the

storage unit. There is caulking that repair work that needs to be done. Ron Hendrickson has shored up the building for winter.

- Members submitting their volunteer hours worked to Donna. They can be emailed to her at Oldbrule.hs@gmail.com. or let her know at meetings.
- The by-laws have been signed and will be distributed to the board. If other members would like a copy, please notify Donna.
- A Director Handbook is being put together and will be distributed in December.
- The Archives Committee has been discussing deaccession of items. Donna was able to find forms previously developed by OBHS. She distributed them to the board. A policy/procedure needs to be developed. It was motioned by Bruce Bergsten, seconded by Ron Hendrickson to reaffirm the use of the accession/deaccession forms. Motion passed.
- It was motioned by Bruce Bergsten, seconded by Brian Paulson to extend the use of the storage unit to 12/31/2026, with the hopes of getting a smaller unit or relinquishing the unit if not needed. Motion passed.
- Fundraising – We need to look into activities to raise funds. One prospect is to send out letters, with the first wave to go to teachers and retired teachers; possible develop a calendar with the windmill and other buildings that we want to highlight for 2027; sell some of the deaccessioned items via rummage sale, online sale, or other sales. A procedure needs to be developed for deaccessioning, i.e., recommended by Archives Committee, go before the Executive Board and possibly before the general membership.

Committees:

- Membership: we have 78 members
- Web site: The web site is tentatively built and needs pictures and review.
- Archives: Continuing to go through the items that we have at the Storage Unit. Continuing to scan items from Carlson Safe, scrapbook items and miscellaneous items and documents. Developing processes and worksheets for gathering information from scrapbooks, deeds, etc. for people to work on at home.
- Research Center: Troy Follis is done with the first part of electrical work. After insulation is installed he will finish the electrical work. John Tuura will be back within a week or so to finish installing the wiring. Then we can start the insulation. Basil Edgette recommended that we use closed cell blown in insulation. He spoke with a gentleman at Duluth Spray Foam, and the guestimate was for about \$6,000. Discussion about using some money from general funds, as this will also house the OBHS office. Ron Hendrickson is concerned as there is not that amount in the general fund and he is concerned that if we take the money from the MSMA account, there will not be much left to do other work. There was discussion about using the fiberglass insulation donated by Dan Gronquist and also use of the remaining Styrofoam in basement. It was agreed the use of fiberglass in the Monticello School is acceptable given it is for above ground use. Fiberglass should not be used in the Research Center due to much of this area being below ground and can retain moisture. The suggestion was to weigh our options and get specific estimates. We need to find out what the average temperature needs to be in the vault. It was decided to table this discussion until we can get actual estimates for a couple options. It was also suggested that we start fundraising. Discussion of types of fundraisers and which may bring us more money: “Go Fund Me”, On-line auction, fund raiser at Kro-Bar without all the door prizes, letter writing, etc.
- Monticello – The biffy has been set by Joe Grube! Jackie Plunkett is hoping to get the school area wired and get the floor in the attic area before winter sets in.
- Windmill and grounds: Brian Paulson has been brushing the area; the windmill has been treated for “Powder Post Beetle”, the drainage area has been finished, along with requesting a quote from Stack Bros. for lightning protection and finishing the roof and moving the cutter stone for display. There was discussion on future additional parking areas at the windmill.
- Eskolin House: Need to set a date for cleaning the house. Plunkett’s did not look at the shavings/dust on floor near chimney. Ron Hendrickson will contact Plunkett’s to insure further pest control.
- Depot: Brian Paulson reported that the depot is buttoned up for winter. The outside siding on the bottom has been painted and attached. The upper area has been trimmed and battens are up waiting for spring to get painted. After that is done, the dock will be built and rails brought in. There is discussion of painting the inside a light sand color.
- Merchandising: Ron Hendrickson had 5 copies of the Davidson Windmill pamphlet printed. Cost is \$16, so we need to sell at \$20. (old booklets were sold for \$8) Silver Tonsberg can make copies of *Sisu and Sauna*, but it will be a spiral bound book. This book cannot be reprinted with the consent of those who drafted the book. Jackie will work on getting this permission. Motion to get the OK from writers to sign release to reprint *Sisu & Sauna* by Mary Ann Gronquist, seconded by Bruce Bergsten. Motion passed. If we get the OK, we should print 20 copies with the pages of corrections added to the back of the book.

November 2025

- Pollari Map: no action
- By-laws: By-laws have been signed, and copies will be distributed to directors. If anyone from the general membership would like a copy, we will either email or provide a copy.
- Donation form: It has been updated and will be included in the newsletter.
- Fundraising: see the President's report.

New Business:

- Discussion of possible change of Executive Board meeting. It was decided to leave it as it is.
- Christmas Party: December 8 at 6:00 pm Potluck. Motion by Ron Hendrickson, seconded by Jackie for Mary Ann Gronquist to purchase Christmas Meat and bring to the party. Motion passed. Please bring Christmas sides for dinner. Additional help is needed to set up and tear down.

Encouragement: Roger Johnson and Audrey Hakkila

Meeting Adjourned at 7:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Bergsten

O-BHS Secretary

Sympathy and Encouragement:

Sympathy to the families of:

Robert "Bob" Ronchi, 87, passed away on Friday, September 12, 2025, at his home in South Range, WI

Connie Agacki Davern

Report on Projects at Windmill Site for 2025

We had an aggressive list of goals for this year and I am happy to report that 23 of 28 projects were finished. The happy addition of Peter Martin to our work crew has been a gift. Many thanks go out to the following wonderful volunteers.

Construction crew: Peter Martin, Brian Paulson, Bruce Carlson, Leo Sanda and myself.

Painting: Mary Ann Gronquist, Donna Bergsten, Sue Hendrickson, Brian Paulson and myself.

Electrical and tractor work: Bob Bender and myself

Rock wall construction and drainage: Cameron Laporte, Brian Paulson and myself.

Tours: Jack Pank, Brian Paulson, Gannon Hill and myself

Demonstrator: Dennis Hill and Brian Paulson

Privacy wall rebuild: Dan Gronquist

Grounds: Bo Higgins, Brian Paulson and myself

Eskolin House: Mary Ann Gronquist, Donna Bergsten, Arlene Hill, Charlene Harms, Ruth Errikla, Jim Mattson and Marlyn Pank

Open House signage: Basil Edgett and myself.



Projects completed for Windmill: Installed chain link security fence, landscape retaining wall and drainage, low voltage lighting and application of Powder Post beetle spray.

For Grounds: Creation of State Park type signage and new privacy fence for biffy.

For Depot: Completion of depot office: paint, window, wood stove install, door trim, and furnishings. Install of LP Smart siding on exterior. Put on new battens, window trim and new south freight door threshold.

Eskolin House: General cleaning and inventories of all merchandise.

Projects for 2026

Mill: Install metal trim on roof, lightning protection and create a display of one of the mill stones in place.

Grounds: Sidewalk from parking lot to main sidewalk at the sauna and enlarge parking lot. Paint picnic tables. Replace and relocate outside bench.

Depot- Paint exterior, build platform and install trackage.

Eskolin House: Apply exterior preservation product, rebuild wall detail, and clean out attic.

AND whatever else comes up on the way!

Submitted by Ron Hendrickson

November 2025

RETURN ADDRESS:

Old-Brule Heritage Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 24

Maple, WI 54854



We are looking at cleaning up our newsletter mailing list. If you are receiving a newsletter and do not care to continue, please let us know. (You may email our secretary at donnabergsten@gmail.com) Also, please check your mailing label. Listed on label is your membership dues expiration date.

December 8	6:00 p.m.	O-BHS General Meeting	Amnicon Town Hall
	6:30 p.m.	Christmas Program	

2026 Schedule

January 12	6:00 PM	Executive Board Meeting	Amnicon Town Hall
February 9	6:00 PM	General Membership Meeting	Amnicon Town Hall
	6:30 PM	<i>Program:</i>	
March 9	6:00 PM	Executive Board Meeting	Amnicon Town Hall
April 13	6:00 PM	General Membership Meeting	Amnicon Town Hall
	6:30 PM	<i>Program:</i>	

We are in the process of updating our web site www.oldbrule.org, but it has not yet been completed. If there is something that you would like to see in the newsletter, please let us know at OldBrule.hs@gmail.com. Thank you!

All who are interested in joining the Old-Brule Heritage Society are encouraged to attend any of our meetings and public programs.