

The Reporter

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The Newsletter of the Waupaca Historical Society

Summer 2011

WHS Board of Directors: Dick Bidwell, President; Mike Kirk, Vice President; Betty Stewart, Secretary; Bob Kessler, Treasurer, Tracy Behrendt, Gerald Chappell, Vera Duesterbeck, Dennis Lear, Glenda Rhodes, Deb Fenske, David Trombla, Joyce Woldt, Don Witt, Marge Witt

WHS Director: Julie Hintz

Hutchinson House Curator: Barbara Fay Wiese

WHS Website: www.waupahistory.org

WHS e-mail: wauphistsoc@waupacaonline.net

Gulf Coast Hurricanes and Their Aftermath

A special program was presented May 19, 2011 by Hans Oppe at the Holly History and Genealogy Center. Also in attendance were representatives from church and Red Cross relief crews who provided information about their experiences in relief trips to the Gulf Coast to help the victims of hurricane disasters.



Mr. Oppe presenting in the Holly Center

Referring to his background, Hans-Joachim W. Oppe mentioned he served during the cold war as a corporate officer in fostering better relations between Germany and the U. S. More recently, working as part of the Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services, he has been a relief provider after all major hurricanes since 2005.

Mr. Oppe's power point explanation of the causative and operational factors underlying hurricanes was most informative and interesting. He described the physical nature of the wind, surge, and salt water damage including the failure of the levees, the flooding of the ninth ward bowl, the total loss of all possessions by thousands of residents in New Orleans and other Gulf Coast cities, and worst of all, the death of 1080 people. In the aftermath of Katrina, Rita, and Ike he was part of the church-based Salvation Army's first relief crew to arrive and feed victims from Canteen Vans.

Mr. Oppe's collection of before and after photos of multiple aspects of the hurricane devastation impressively demonstrated the impact of nature's wrath. Special attention was also given to the Great Galveston Hurricane of 9/1900 which dramatically leveled the island city and killed over 8,000 people.

As coordinator, Mrs. Tracy Behrendt nicely organized the evening and introduced the guest speaker. The speaker presentation committee of Joyce Woldt, Marge Witt, Dennis Lear, Tracy Behrendt, and Jerry Chappell provided ample coffee and cookies.



Presentation coordinator Tracy Behrendt.



The Salvation Army's relief team in front of food van. Photo courtesy of Hans Oppe.

We Should Have Asked Aunt Grace

The Waupaca Area Public Library begins the fall Lunch and Learn Series on Tuesday, September 13, 2011, with "We Should Have Asked Aunt Grace; Collecting Family History Before its Too Late", presented by Glenda Rhodes, President, Waupaca Area Genealogical Society. The program follows a light lunch at noon. Call the library for reservations.

The WHS Facilities Are Active and Attracting Many Visitors

Director Julie Hintz is being kept busy attending to the needs of visitors on Wednesday and Friday afternoons at the **Holly History and Genealogical Center**. WHS is pleased to announce that our application for a Wisconsin Historical Society & Wisconsin Council for Local History Affiliate Mini-Grant was accepted for a matching sum of \$500. Member donations helped to secure the grant. The money will allow us to upgrade our Past Perfect software for accessioning, cataloging and research processing and will include Multimedia and Imaging software.

Barbara Fay Wiese reports that our Saturday and Sunday afternoon tours at the **Hutchinson House Museum** have drawn many curious visitors, including members of other historical societies. During Strawberry Fest, Fourth of July, Jazz Vespers, and Family Reunions, we have had "full houses." This year we continue to make button twirlers with kids, as well as Scavenger Photos. We have a croquet set and can set up a few hoops in the front yard for the amusement of children or adults – including the docents! The special "Apron Exhibit" draws many comments. Folks have generously responded to our request for donations for reconstructing our historic windows (work being done by Jim Schiller) and painting the Museum. Julie Hintz wrote and submitted a grant to the Waupaca Area Community Foundation for the "Hutchinson House Exterior Painting Project".

Mike Kirk and his helpers have entertained many visitors who are showing up at the **Waupaca Train Depot**. The depot renovation team has finished the east brick depot platform, office woodwork, and some more ceiling work. The following is an excerpt from Mike's memo of June 19, 2011:

"I did not count the numbers yet, but think we had two hundred or so people at the depot open house yesterday (Strawberry Fest). We had a great time! Saw some old friends and met some new ones. One was a railroad

dispatcher I used to visit in Stevens Point that operated a control system. Another was a young man that worked very hard at cleaning up brush and digging stumps when we first got the depot in 2004. A bunch of guys working on the Eland depot came and told me how they restored their baggage cart that is nearly identical to the one I need to restore. They are giving me left over material and specialized wheel repair tools. A former Soo Line operator who had worked at our depot explained some of our telegraph equipment. Another man donated a coal fireplace grate that we can use. Everyone seemed impressed with the progress."



The Waupaca Depot, Model T, baggage cart, and east brick platform. Photo courtesy of Mike Kirk.

"Antiques Appraisal Program "

WHS will host Mr. Mark Moran as he conducts an "Antiques Appraisal Program" on Sunday afternoon October 9 from 1 – 4 p. m. at the Holly History and Genealogy Center. This program is being offered as a Fundraising Event exclusively for members of the Waupaca Historical Society. 50% of the money raised at this event will be returned to WHS. Your participation will help raise much needed funds for WHS.

Mr. Moran is a former senior editor for antiques and collectible books with Krause Publications in Iola, WI. He is also the author of more than 25 books and has participated in the 2010 "Antiques Roadshow". Members interested in having items appraised should contact Julie Hintz (at 715-256-9980) to schedule an appraisal time slot. The cost of appraisal for one item is \$20. Each member may have up to three items appraised. Five minutes will be allotted for the appraisal of one item. By prescheduling appraisal appointments, each participant will know when they are to appear during the afternoon and lengthy waiting will be avoided. The deadline for scheduling an appraisal appointment is Friday, September 2, 2011. The program may be opened to the public if the minimum of 30 appraisal items is not reached through our membership.

This program is open to all our members, regardless of whether they wish to have an item appraised. If you enjoy antiques and vintage items, you may want to come to watch. We will have audience seating available, and participant and other members are encouraged to walk in –walk out at their convenience between 1 and 4:30 p. m.

Mr. Moran can evaluate items in the following categories: Fine Art, including paintings, drawings, prints and statuary; Furniture (small pieces are best); Ceramics, including figural pottery, vases, dishes, kitchenware, and stoneware; Glassware, including lighting, marbles and souvenir items; Quilts; Folk Art, including carvings; Assorted toys, including dolls, windups, and mechanical banks; Metalware, including iron, bronze, pot metal, silver, and silver plate; Clocks, including mantel, and hanging; Costume jewelry, including brooches, bracelets, and earrings. Mr. Moran cannot appraise any weapons, fine jewelry (including precious gems, pocket and wristwatches), and musical instruments. If you have questions about an item you wish to have appraised, please contact Julie Hintz and she will contact Mr. Moran on your behalf.

Annual Membership Meeting

Time and Place: This year the annual membership meeting will occur in the context of a deluxe "grill-out" dinner to be held at the WHS Waupaca Train Depot at 5:30 p. m. Tuesday September 6, 2011.

Speakers:

The State of the Waupaca Historical Society – President Dick Bidwell or Director Julie Hintz
The Financial Health of WHS – Treasurer Bob Kessler

Cuisine Dinner: The Board of Directors guarantee that juicy, delicious grilled hotdogs and hamburgers, complemented with favorite pot luck dishes (bring a dish to pass), and a cold hearty beverage will please and satisfy the palates of all attendees.

Repercussions of Menominee Termination

An Indian history article by Jerry Chappell

The impact of termination in the 1950s did much to devastate the integrity of the Menominee Nation. {Termination relative to the Menominee meant: To terminate or sever federal supervision and wardship; to discontinue or withdraw the trust relationship with the government and its protection; and to no longer recognize tribal sovereignty. }

David Beck (*The Struggle For Self-Determination History of the Menominee Indians Since 1854*, 2005) reports that in 1953, "The Menominee fell victim to a governmental crusade carried out by Congress and the executive branch in which the main advocates of the termination policy were the commissioners of Indian Affairs and {Utah} Senator {Arthur V.} Watkins {who was Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Indian Affairs}



Senator Watkins.

Senator Watkins ran roughshod over established Menominee tribal procedure and ignored tribal convention to gain a vote of acceptance from them for termination. After rewriting the senate version of the bill into an entrapping document, Watkins went to a tribal General Council meeting and told the tribe {literally lied to them} that congress had already decided on terminating them, and, if they did not agree to termination, the government would not release the \$8.5 million in claims money {due to them through winning a tribal law suit

for government mismanagement of forest resources, each Indian family was due to get \$1,500}. Not fully understanding what all the repercussions of acceptance would be {because Watkins would not let interpreters convey the details}, the Council, which was minimally represented {barely 10 percent of the eligible voters}, voted acceptance by an improper "show-of-hands" vote, rather than by a written referendum vote that included all adult Menominees. When they understood what was going on, the Council met again and rejected the earlier vote for termination by 197-0. They agreed to give up their \$8.5 million claim settlement if it meant they had to accept termination. However, that tribal repudiation of termination was entirely ignored by the government and the plan was pushed forward anyway.

Beck comments on the result: "On 17 June 1954 President Eisenhower visited the greatest modern disaster upon the Menominee by signing the termination bill into law. That day the federal government released the per capita payment and closed the Menominee tribal rolls. No Menominee born after 17 June would be considered Indians by the United States. The law charged the tribe with formulating a plan to take over federal responsibilities."(p. 143).

The termination plan was completed by a Coordinating and Negotiating Committee which met the extended planning 1961 deadline by only one week. The plan led to the creation of two forms of governance: the first was a corporation, Menominee Enterprises, Inc. (MEI), to oversee the timber and sawmill operations, and the second was Menominee County as a separate county. The new county's boundaries were contiguous with those of the reservation.

Termination proved disastrous for the Menominee in all facets of their political, economic, and cultural lives. Five repercussion factors were most crippling: financial ruin, ineffective MEI reorganization and management of Menominee business, crises in healthcare coverage, reduced education opportunity, and the diminution of tribal governing authority.

The financial disaster

"Even before termination went into effect the Menominee assets diminished rapidly. They used nearly half of the \$10 million tribal nest egg for the per capita payment of \$1,500 to each of the 3,270 tribal members. The tribe was forced to spend another \$2 million in dividends to make up for a shortfall caused by the Bureau of Indians underpayment on the stumpage fund. With the costs of renovations to the hospital in Keshena and the church in Neopit, the tribal accounts fell below \$2 million. In testimony before Congress a decade later, Ada Deer and others said, 'By 1960 our tribe was operating at a \$250,000 annual deficit.'" (p. 150)

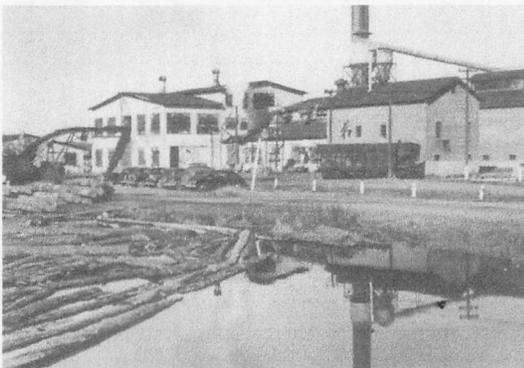
"Taxes as well proved to be an enormous burden, both on the tribe and on individuals. Although Menominee County was Wisconsin's poorest, the state required a higher percentage of payments from the county – providing less help than to almost any other county in the state {the state expected the federal government to cover this}. . . The cost of taxes in addition to the cost of improvements to the mill proved crippling to the tribe. By 1967 these costs were more than double the MEI net income."(p. 154)

"Menominee individuals did not qualify for welfare payments as long as they held the 'income bonds' issued on termination, which provided a small stumpage fund. But with high unemployment {up to 24.4 percent} and without federal aid, welfare became a necessity for many Menominees. In addition, they were forced to

purchase the land on which they lived and to pay taxes on it. Many people, probably a majority of the tribe, thus lost their income bonds, either as collateral for land purchase or as collateral to the state for welfare payments. . . Homeowners who could not pay taxes lost their land; others were unable to pay for home repairs and upkeep now that individual money rather than tribal funds paid for those things.” (p. 154)

The ineffective business management of the Menominee Enterprise, Inc.

“The {MEI directed} reorganization of the logging business damaged the tribe economically, both by diminishing the profits from the mill and by destroying the social service nature of the operations. At the time of termination the mill was found to violate state code in 132 instances; the tribe paid one hundred thousand dollars to correct these violations. MEI ran the mill under termination. Because federal officials had never trained Menominees to take over mill operations, the tribe was forced to hire outsiders. Of the first six presidents of MEI only one was Menominee. The new mill leadership, largely ignorant of or unsympathetic to



Management of the Neopit sawmill* and the forest business became the key charge of the Menominee Enterprises, Inc.

the role of the mill in Menominee culture and society and needing to bring large profits to support the tribe in its new status, tried to modernize mill operations. {For example, purchasing large trucks that were too heavy and wide for the forest roads and that put the smaller tribal truckers out of work.} (p. 151)

“As with other facilities on the reservation, the Menominee logging facilities and the infrastructure were not up to {or kept up to} modern U. S. standards. . . During this time the mill lost money, in part due to the upheaval of the termination process {and poor leadership}, in part due to a decreasing demand for mill products.”(p. 152)

“MEI had already leased public campsites along the Wolf River to the state and summer home lots on the Wolf River and on small reservation lakes to non-Indians. ‘MEI then quietly sold those plots outright to increase the number of county taxpayers. Voters approved land sales at a meeting of 253 stockholders, although the language of the proposal was stated so generally that most of those voting did not realize what they had agreed to. . . This led to an agreement between the MEI board and the developer N. E. Isaacson, Inc. In 1968 they formed a partnership to flood a series of small reservation lakes to create one large lake, called Legend Lake or Lake of the Menominees. In July of 1968 sale of individual lake lots to non-Menominees began. Within three years thirteen hundred lots were sold; eventually, some two thousand were sold. Non-Indians began to build homes and move onto Menominee land for the first time.”(p. 155)

The Loss in the adequacy of HealthCare

“The impacts of termination on the community extended even beyond the threat to the forest and the loss of subsistence hunting and fishing rights. Healthcare was immediately affected. In 1961, for example, the old hospital in Keshena was closed for failure to meet state standards even after the tribe spent three hundred thousand dollars to upgrade it. The federal government refused to kick in the final fifty thousand dollars needed. Few tribal members owned cars, and even when they did ‘many could not depend upon them for a 20

mile trip to a clinic in the neighboring Shawano County,' according to a tribal source. Ten years later tribal leaders summarized the healthcare disaster: 'With the closing of the BIA hospital, we lost our health services, and most Menominee continue to suffer from lack of medical care. There have been no full time doctors or dentists in Menominee County since termination. Shortly after termination, our people were stricken by a TB epidemic which caused great suffering and hardship because of the lack of local medical facilities.'

The Reduction in Educational Opportunity

The same group of leaders summarized the impact of termination on education. The St. Joseph's Catholic boarding school in Keshena had closed its dormitories in 1952 and became a day school. At this time approximately 80 percent of Menominee children attended Catholic schools. That percentage began a steady decline as parents moved more children into the public school system. Termination brought the end of funding to help parents send their children to parochial schools.

The leaders testified: Education in Menominee County – which theoretically should offer our people a hope of future advancement – has also suffered because of termination. The loss of the BIA school required that our youth be sent to Shawano County for their high school training. The Shawano school system has assumed that Menominee children possess the same cultural and historical background as a middle-class white family community. Consequently, the school system has shown insensitivity to the cultural background and the special needs of our children. In many cases, our children find themselves objects of rejection and discrimination. Since 1961, our high school drop-out rates have increased substantially, absenteeism has soared, and our children apparently are suffering a downward trend in achievement. Comparisons based on educational achievement tests show that Menominee children fall significantly below district and national norms."(p. 153)

The diminution in tribal governance authority.

Perhaps the most disparaging and disorganizing factor for the Menominees was the loss of the authority of their age-old two-body governing structure. The old smaller Advisory Council's composition of chiefs, subchiefs, and other representatives of the clans and larger families was the voice of the nation. The larger General Council, as a political check, gave the nation a democratic face. Governing in behalf of the community, more than the individual, the two-body structure considered all issues that were important to the economy and culture of the reservation. Every Indian had an opportunity to have a say in an issue of education, health, lumbering, allotment, incorporation, or whatever, and the nation ruled by consensus. Although what the structure of the Menominee government became after termination seems unclear, apparently forestry issues were now controlled by a Board of Directors of the Menominee Enterprises, Inc. who used the clout of the 44 percent block vote of the Wisconsin Trust Company to prevail, to their liking on issues, over the interests of rest of the individual Indian stock holders. With the dismissal of their Advisory and General Council governing structure, the Nation and its members also faced having to simultaneously create and serve on separated committees, some to contend with prevailing regulations of the federal government, many others to contend to the new regulations that went with being under the state rules of Wisconsin, and finally others that went with being the new Menominee County. It was chaotic for the common Indian to offer a political and cultural voice in such an overwhelming new bureaucracy.

Waupaca Historical Society
321 South Main Street
Waupaca, Wisconsin 54981-1745

“Keeping History Alive and Making History”

An Important New Acquisition: Samuel P. Godfrey Hitching Post

Tom Godfrey recently donated the historic hitching post that stands to the west of the Hutchinson House Museum walkway arbor. It originally belonged to his grandfather, Samuel P. Godfrey, who resided on Division St. in Waupaca, in the 1890s. Samuel Godfrey (who had married Edna M. Plowman, daughter of Jabez and Sara Shaw Plowman on 1-21-1891) had the post made by local stonecutter Sammy Davidson in his shop near Lakeside Cemetery. Made from granite and fashioned to resemble a cut-off tree, the hitching post features a large metal ring embedded into the top for “hitching up” a visitor’s horse. The Godfrey family moved several times over the years, always moving the treasured hitching post with them. Now, through the generosity of grandson Tom Godfrey, the hitching post will be a permanent fixture in front of the Hutchinson House. So if you come to visit via horse, we’re ready for you!