

THE REPORTER

Waupaca Historical Society, 321 South Main Street, Waupaca, WI 54981
Open Wednesdays, 12-3, Thursdays, 10-2, Fridays, 12-3

VOLUME 22 – NUMBER 2

SPRING 2018

Volunteers Needed at the Hutchinson House

Though it may not look like it, spring is on its way. And with spring comes our open season for the Hutchinson House Museum in South Park!

Each year, hundreds of visitors tour the 1854 home to catch a glimpse of life in early Waupaca. Volunteers lead the tours each year, giving life to one of the oldest homes in Waupaca.

Volunteers at the Hutchinson House give one tour a summer or one every weekend—the Waupaca Historical Society is flexible in scheduling and happy to train anyone interested. The museum is open from 1 to 4 p.m., Saturdays and Sundays from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The museum is also open on summer holidays.

Volunteers need no experience and must be 16 years or older. If you are interested in donating your time and sharing your passion for history this summer, please email Tracy Behrendt at director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org or call us at



(715) 256-9980.

The Hutchinson House opens in May and is looking for volunteer tour guides this summer.

Local History in the Spotlight for Upcoming Programs

By Tracy Behrendt



Scott Christie, owner of the Cristy home on Lake Street pictured above, will present a program on Waupaca homes on May 17th at the Holly Center.

Waupaca history will be the focus of upcoming programs this spring and summer at the Holly History and Genealogy Center and Depot.

Scott Christie, chairperson of Waupaca's Historic Preservation Commission, will present, "Historic Homes of Waupaca" on Thursday, May 17th at 6 p.m. Christie will focus on the history and architecture of the many beautiful homes in the city of Waupaca.

On Thursday, June 14th, Michael Koehler will present, "The Danes Hall: Past, Present and Future" at 6 p.m. The Danes Hall at the end of North Main Street was built in 1894 by the Danes' Home Society and is currently being restored. The program will tell the story of the building and plans for its future use.

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At the Depot: Work and Those That Made It Possible

By Mike Kirk

Despite the snow and cold, we have been very busy at the Depot this spring. We finished restoring three recently donated wooden filing cabinets and put them in place. We have also been working on the operator's desk in the bay window. We finished the desk and are trying to make the office look as much like it did years ago in the old photographs. We even purchased a device to run the telegraph sounder—it sounds just like an actual message is coming in! We also got the steps and railings installed from the smoking room to the baggage room, making it safer and easier to get to the basement.

For a few weeks in March and April, the Waupaca Community Theatre's production of a play took over the Depot. We have also held several other events and welcomed a few rentals.

And, before long, the Depot will be open regular weekend hours. Come visit us Saturdays in May from 12 to 5 p.m. and from Memorial Day through Labor Day, Saturdays and Sundays from 12 to 5 p.m. We will also be open during summer holidays and events.

Unfortunately, though, the last month has been difficult for our family of volunteers and staff at the Depot. It is with sadness I report the losses of our two biggest Depot supporters. First, Jim Taylor died on March 24th. He had been in failing health and was living at Bethany Home in Waupaca. Jim donated his Milwaukee Road caboose and its contents to the Waupaca Historical Society in 2013, along with the moving costs. He also donated his collection of Soo Line china and hollowware (metal tableware). He liked to watch for Soo Line items for sale and acquire them for the Depot collection. I never knew when he would call, excited with



These restored file cabinets will now hold railroad archival materials from the collections on the first floor of the Depot.

another find. He always met us at his door with a warm smile and friendly greeting. We will certainly miss our visits with him.

It is difficult to find the proper words to write about the passing of Dave Johnson in such a sudden and traumatic way on March 28th, so soon after Jim. The unfortunate circumstances are beyond the scope of this story.

Dave had been an enthusiastic supporter of the Waupaca Historical Society from the very beginning when he donated half of its purchase price. A little less than three years ago, when he moved to Park Vista Retirement Living from his home on Nestling Lake, he donated part of his G scale model railroad and much of his railroad memorabilia collection to the society for the Depot. He funded the entire Depot basement project including the model railroad and the new heating system. He paid for most of the cost of the Soo Line potato car and its transportation to Waupaca last year as well.

Everything in Dave's life was neat and orderly and held to the highest standards. He always wanted the same for the Depot. He would often urge me to keep making progress and to be sure it was of the highest quality. Sometimes I felt like it was the school teacher in him coming out. We will certainly miss him.

Just before he died, Dave sent me the following poem and asked that I share it with you. I think it is a fitting end to this article.



The Depot, pictured before the snow, will be open Saturdays in May from 12 to 5 p.m.

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At the Depot (Continued from p. 2)

The poem is titled, "The Train of Life," author unknown.

*At birth we boarded the train and met our parents,
and we believe they will always travel on our side.*

*However, at some station
our parents will step down from the train,
leaving us on this journey alone.*

*As time goes by,
other people will board the train;
and they will be significant
i.e. our siblings, friends, children,
and even the love of your life.*

*Many will step down
and leave a permanent vacuum.
Others will go so unnoticed
that we don't realize
they vacated their seats.*

*This train ride will be full of joy,
sorrow, fantasy, expectations,
hellos, goodbyes, and farewells.*

*Success consists of having a good relationship
with all passengers
requiring that we give the best of ourselves.*

*The mystery to everyone is:
We do not know at which station
we ourselves will step down.
So, we must live in the best way,
love, forgive, and offer the best of who we are.*

*It is important to do
this because when the time comes for us to step
down
and leave our seat empty
we should leave behind beautiful memories
for those who will continue to travel on the train of
life.*

*I wish you a joyful journey on the train of life.
Reap success and give lots of love.
More importantly, thank God for the journey.*

*Lastly, I thank you
for being one of the passengers on my train.*

Spring Programs Highlight Local History at Holly Center (Continued from p. 1)

On July 21st, the Waupaca Historical Society and the Waupaca Area Public Library are hosting "Sounds at the Depot" at the historic Waupaca Depot. The event, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., will include storytimes and activities about sounds heard on the railroad. The father-son duo Big and Tall will play railroad songs for the whole family at 11 a.m. on the day of the event. Refreshments will be available for purchase as well.

On July 26th at 6 p.m., several residents from Camp Cleghorn, on the southeast corner of Columbia Lake, will speak about the history of the camp, its connection to the temperance movement and its life today as private land.

Once a summer camp focused on teaching and enforcing abstinence from alcohol, Camp Cleghorn today is an association of 41 cottage owners. The church on the association's property, now over 100 years old, still holds Sunday church services in the summer. One service each summer still focuses on abstinence from drugs and alcohol.

All Waupaca Historical Society programs are free to the public, thanks to individual and business



Once a summer camp, Camp Cleghorn (pictured above in a postcard) on Columbia Lake is now a private association of 41 cottage owners.

sponsorships. Those interested can sponsor a presenter and/or refreshments, which ranges from \$50 to \$300. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor and making a tax-deductible donation toward an upcoming program, please contact us today.

Greetings from the New Hutchinson House Curator

By Katharine McArthur

I am very excited to be joining the Waupaca Historical Society staff as the new curator for the Hutchinson House Museum. I am currently in my fifth year as a social studies teacher at the high school level, and my new job provides a unique opportunity to bring my love for historical education into a new venue.

Here are a few facts about me! Currently I teach social studies at Lourdes Academy in Oshkosh. I received my degree in history for the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. I have been living in Waupaca since last March and am eager to become more involved in the community.

In the short time that I have been the curator for the Hutchinson House, I have started formulating plans to continue improving the museum. My main goal is a cohesive vision for the exhibits in the different rooms of the house. We will be reducing the objects on exhibit in order to unify the historical context, focusing more closely on the Victorian age and late

1800s to 1900. By being more selective with the objects on display, we will be able to highlight the more unique aspects of our collection. I will also be working to make our labeling system cohesive and an enrichment of the visitor experience.

For the long term, we hope to be able to make better use of the King Cottage (behind the Hutchinson House) as an exhibit space. Ideally we would highlight the history of the Wisconsin Veterans Home and the experiences of the individuals who lived there. This space has a great deal of potential. I would also like to see the "loom room" on the second floor of the Hutchinson House returned to an exhibit space.

If you are interested in helping out with any of these projects or becoming a tour guide at the Hutchinson House, please let me know. I would be excited to work with you! Hope to see you this summer!

Wish List

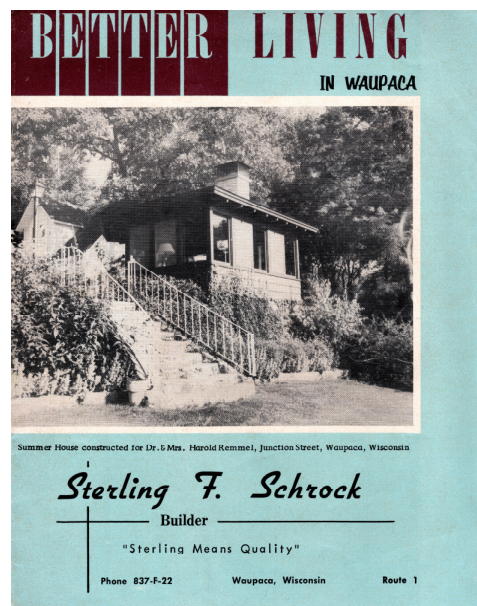
The Waupaca Historical Society is thankful for in-kind donations of new or gently used items. If you can donate or sponsor a Wish List item below, please contact us at (715) 256-9980 or director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org. Or just stop in during open hours!

- Antique stapler and ink bottles for a fountain pen for display at the Depot
- Tablet for historic photos (\$200)
- Clothing rack for storage (\$136)
- Tablet stand (\$100)
- Chalkboard slates and chalk (\$35)
- Display materials (\$25-\$100)
- Paper towels

Looking to volunteer your time this year? The Waupaca Historical Society is looking for a collections volunteer to assist with cataloguing donations and objects in the collection. If you enjoy learning more about or working with historic collections, this is the perfect volunteer opportunity for you!

Collections Corner

This advertising booklet for Waupaca's Sterling Schrock was recently donated to the Waupaca Historical Society. The booklet features pictures of home interiors and exteriors, including the photograph on the front cover of the Rimmel home on Junction Street.



Waupaca Curling Artifacts on Display at the Holly Center

For nearly 140 years, Waupaca has boasted a curling club. Though often considered a winter sport, Waupaca residents of all ages play curling year-round. The club hosts and travels to various tournaments and games throughout the year as well.

The Waupaca Historical Society has long collected artifacts related to the Waupaca curling club, including stones, photographs and programs. In 2017 alone, nearly 30 items were donated related to the Waupaca Curling Club.

To showcase these new and old donations, visitors can view “Curling in Waupaca,” a small display of artifacts telling the story of the city’s love for curling. The exhibit will be on view throughout the spring and summer.

The Waupaca Curling Club started in 1879, when Henry W. Williams organized the first curling club. Williams shared a set of curling stones he brought with him from Portage, Wis.

In the early years, curlers played on Mirror Lake. But after years of struggling with local skaters for use of the ice, the club moved around to other Waupaca locations, including the local Opera House on Jefferson Street and the front lawn of the Waupaca County Courthouse.

This article, from the Waupaca County Post on January 18, 1945, tells an account of one Saturday night on the courthouse lawn. The title of the article was, “You Don’t Have to Be Nutty to Become a Curler.”

In Waupaca, Wis., before the present curling rink was built, the county courthouse lawn was flooded for use as a curling rink, says the Milwaukee Journal.

One bitterly cold Saturday night in the courthouse square, lights were blazing, crowds of townspeople stamped about to keep their feet from freezing, while all eyes were glued to the antics of the curling teams on the ice.

A stranger among the spectators tapped the late Dr. P.J. Christofferson on the shoulder.

“Would you be so kind as to tell me what is going on here?” he asked. “I’ve been traveling out of Chicago for 30 years and never in my life have I seen anything like this!”

“Hmm, that so?” replied the doctor. “Well, you see that building there is the county insane asylum



In 1950, Waupaca’s first women’s curling club—the Waupaca Lochs—were formed. Some of the people pictured above are (left to right) Dr. Gordon Wickman (with bag), Mary Louise Stratton (middle, smiling), Em Shambeau, Bea Hansen, Johnny Hansen (behind Bea), Gladys Hendrickson and Isabel Salan.

and since it’s right in the center of town, it’s pretty hard to arrange for the patients to get outside for exercise – especially in the winter, so every Saturday night the asylum attendants hand all the old brooms about the place to the inmates and order them to get out and sweep the yard clean. Nobody around here seems to mind, and the exercise does ‘em good.”

The stranger, satisfied with the explanation, shook his head sadly as one of the players shouted, “Sweep, you sons of Scotland, sweep!”

In 1924, the first part of the present Waupaca Curling Club was built at the end of West Badger Street.

With the new building, the popularity of curling grew. The curling house was used five nights a week from November through March. In 1950, 14 women formed the “Waupaca Lochs.” Before long, Waupaca was hosting women’s and mixed bonspiels or tournaments.

In the early 1950s, the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association (WIAA) recognized curling as a sport. The Waupaca High School team won the state championship in 1961, 1963 and 1965.

Today, the Waupaca Curling Club continues to thrive, teaching everyone from middle and high school students to seniors the basics of curling.

Looking Back in the “Waupaca County Post”

“Happiness Is---My Home Town”

By Cal Swenson

Published on August 22, 1974

“Oh, you’re so fortunate having been born and brought up in the city where you can see and do everything!” A very common statement and most of us have heard it expressed in one form or another.

I’m glad that I was reared in a small town—population about 1400. But I don’t call it “small.” We have plenty of people here. I can stroll down Main Street on a busy Friday night and see scarcely a soul I know. I can mingle with the crowd around the Courthouse Square during bank concert nights in summer and be almost a complete stranger. Yet, I know that my many friends are just around the corner if I should want or need them.

Happiness is the chance, sometimes referred to as progress, I have seen in my hometown. Way back when did you ever hear the terrifying peal of the fire bell in the dead of a cold winter’s night? And then you dash to the window and listen for the clip-clop of the horses’ boots as they clang down Main Street drawing the fire engine and hook and ladder cart. You wonder whose house is afire. It could be Ed’s, Helen’s, John’s or Uncle Frank’s, all of whom are up that way.

Then came the day the bell was removed and a screeching siren mounted even higher which could be heard for miles. Soon thereafter the horses were replaced with a monstrous bright red four wheel drive La France fire truck. We thought that was something! When that equipment roared down Main Street you could practically hear “Clear the track, we’re on our way.”

There was Brainard’s bridge, about a mile from downtown, where each spring we were lured to pick mayflowers and plunge our feet into the river now a fashionable suburb of expensive homes. I envy the people who reside there, but it’s not the same to me as they say, “You can never go back!”

My home town has always looked good to me. The school system is excellent and since I graduated there are more new buildings than I can count, including a splendid new high school complex occupied for the first time last fall. Churches of all denominations dot my town, many of them architectural masterpieces and none outdated. There are two impressive new banks of which any large city would be proud. Few towns this size can boast

a Carnegie Library well-staffed and well-stocked with all types of reading material.

Time was when my town was the potato center of this area with “spud” warehouses scattered all over the third ward.

One of the potato magnates—we thought of him as the richest man in town—built the lavish Palace Theatre about 1920, now the site of one of the new banks. Oddly enough, his name was Penney. There were a couple of starch factories too. We kids never did know what their function was but I do remember that they both burned down. How times changed! Now we have a huge foundry, a world famous cheese plant, a nationally known automatic garage door opener factory and one of the best-rated weekly newspapers in the state. Progress—certainly!

What I like most about my home town is the Chain o’ Lakes, a diamond necklace of sparkling clean waters as blue as the sky, just four miles southwest of town. From early summer until late fall, the area is “busting out all over.” Thousands of summer residents more than double the population. Sure, there are many complaints of overcrowding, too much traffic on both highway and water—complaints that town merchants readjust their prices to “tourist rates.” A survey by a local organization has proved the latter to be untrue. I think it is a great compliment that these vacationers want to return with the warm weather. Moreover, we locals should not forget that the lakes are our main “industry” and the summers would be quite drab and dull without the folks who come to enjoy them.

I love our beautiful South Park at the end of Main Street—the splashing fountain in the center—the oldest house in town transported nearby to become a fascinating museum displaying treasures and artifacts from bygone days – the ever popular public bathing beach just down the hill, swarming with kids under the watchful eyes of qualified lifeguards on hot summer days. I love the Victorian Cristy mansion on Lake Street, restored this past summer to the original 1890 grandeur, an unforgettable thrill for those who take advantage of the recently inducted tours of its regal past.

How do I feel about my home town? HAPPY!

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321 S. Main Street
Waupaca, WI 54981

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All programs are held at the Holly History and Genealogy Center, 321 S. Main St., unless otherwise noted.

Thurs., May 17th, 6 p.m.	“Historic Homes of Waupaca” with Scott Christie
Thurs., June 14th, 6 p.m.	“The Danes Hall: Past, Present and Future” with Michael Koehler
Thurs., July 26th, 6 p.m.	“The Story of Camp Cleghorn” with Camp Cleghorn residents
Thurs., August 9th, 6 p.m.	“Settlers’ Gardens” with Marilyn Herman

Staff:

Director: Tracy Behrendt **Hutchinson House Curator:** Katharine McArthur

Maintenance Staff: Jeff Weasner and Linda Kirk

Board of Directors:

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