

THE REPORTER

Waupaca Historical Society, 321 South Main Street, Waupaca, WI 54981

Open Wednesday, 12-3, Thursday, 10-2, Friday, 12-3

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WINTER 2017

WHS Receives 2016 Project Facelift Award from Waupaca Chamber



The historic Waupaca Railroad Depot is pictured before (top) and after (bottom two) restoration.

For nearly 13 years, the Waupaca Historical Society has worked to restore Waupaca's only remaining Depot. With the help of numerous volunteers, particularly WHS board member Mike Kirk, the Depot interior and exterior have been transformed to its former beauty and historic appearance.

Over the years, Kirk and his volunteers have restored nearly every inch of the Depot. New flooring was inserted from the old Waupaca gymnasium, woodwork and heaters were refurbished, and water and heat were installed. The area underneath the Depot was also dug out, allowing WHS to add a model railroad display and areas for display of railroad artifacts.

In 2016, WHS offered summer hours for the first time at the Depot. It also opened the Depot's lower-level model railroad display, which volunteers will continue to work on this year.

With all this work in mind, the Waupaca Chamber of Commerce has awarded the Waupaca Historical Society the 2016 Project Facelift Award for the historic Wauapca Railroad Depot project.

WHS Vice President Mike Kirk and board member Jeff Weasner, both devoted volunteers at the Depot, accepted the award at the Chamber's annual awards ceremony on Tuesday, January 24th at the Waupaca Ale House.

Though work continues at the Depot in the lower-level model railroad area, a large part of the first level and exterior restoration is complete.

The Depot is open for programs during the winter months and for scheduled tours. If you would like to visit the Depot, call the Holly History and Genealogy Center at (715) 256-9980 to set up a tour.

Remembering Former Board Member, Supporter Joyce Woldt

On Sunday, July 24, 2016, the Waupaca community lost a friend, historian and active resident in Joyce Woldt. Woldt was a former Waupaca Historical Society board member, Accessions Committee chairman and supporter. This remembrance is written by former board member and friend Gerald Chappell:

We miss Joyce Dexter Woldt for she was a significant fellow Waupaca area historian.

In about 2006, she nominated me to join the Waupaca Historical Society's Board of Directors. It was the same year she also nominated current board member David Trombla and board president Dennis Lear. In fact I learned that she was and had been for years, essentially a "One Woman Nomination Committee." In that capacity she assured that the working blood of the Society would keep Waupaca area history alive.

In 2009, she encouraged me to take a crack as editor of the WHS newsletter, *The Reporter*, and include some history articles for which she was a key proof reader. In doing so, I asked the membership to submit articles entitled, "My reason for being involved in the Waupaca Historical Society." She was the first to respond (her article was included in the Winter 2009 issue). Within that article it was clear that Joyce was Waupaca area history personified. The first paragraphs in her article reveal why:

"My reason for belonging to and supporting the Waupaca Historical Society arises out of my family's strong historical ties to the Waupaca Area...My ancestral Calkins family began their trek to the Midwest in the first half of the 19th century. They were a family of eight boys and one girl. They were the children of John and Asenath Andrews Calkins. They came from western New York, traveling down

through the Erie Canal and the Great Lakes. My Great-Great Grandfather Volney Gunn Calkins was the last to arrive.

He came in 1858 with his

wife, Harriet, and their year-old daughter, Marilla. The first year they were here they bought a city lot on Jefferson Street. He soon was buying land on the western shores of the Chain o' Lakes where they made their home. He raised young stock and had a boat landing on the shores of what was then Hicks Lake and is now Sunset Lake. Many of the Calkins offspring acquired lakeshore lots from the Calkins property and built cottages."

I soon learned that Joyce essentially moved into the Holly History and Genealogy Center back around 2000 when WHS moved from the Heritage House (now called the King Cottage behind the Hutchinson House). And over the years, she was the key person knowledgeable enough about WHS, the Holly Center and its collections to substitute for former director Julie Hintz when she could not be on duty.

When WHS began work on its collections policies and practices, Joyce became the heart of a new Collections Committee that soon set comprehensive policies. She then led, without ever saying 'no,' the work of cataloguing all new donations. She remained on that committee even after retiring from her long stand on the Board of Directors.

Joyce Woldt was a role model on how to serve as a contributing member of WHS. Yes, we are forever grateful to Joyce for doing more than her share of keeping Waupaca area history alive and making new history. And, yes, we will truly miss Joyce Ann Dexter Woldt.



A young Joyce Woldt (left) pictured with a friend.



Jessica Michna as Cordelia Harvey, Mills Featured in Upcoming Programs

Local historian and WHS board member Ron Arthur will present a program entitled, "The Red Mill on the Crystal" at the Holly History and Genealogy Center on Thursday, February 23rd at 6 p.m.

Arthur is a former captain on the Chief Waupaca, which runs out of the Clear Water Harbor Bar in King. He has a great love for the Chain O'Lakes area and an interest in the milling industry in the Waupaca area. The Red Mill is sponsoring refreshments for the program.

On Thursday, March 23rd at 6 p.m., Jessica Michna will portray former Wisconsin governor's wife Cordelia Harvey at the Holly Center.

Michna, a reenactor who now resides in Racine, Wis., has a passion for history and travels the Midwest portraying various historic women. This will be her first visit to the Holly Center and first visit to Waupaca since her program as Eleanor Roosevelt at the Waupaca Area Public Library last year. Refreshments will be served at this family-friendly event.



Jessica Michna will portray Cordelia Harvey on Thurs., March 23rd at 6 p.m. at the Holly Center.

Cordelia Harvey was the wife of promising young governor Louis Harvey in 1862. When her husband accidentally drowned on a visit to Wisconsin soldiers in Tennessee during the Civil War, Cordelia found herself alone and facing an unknown future. Like her husband, Cordelia shared a passion for Wisconsin soldiers fighting in the Civil War and was soon nominated by the new governor to be the official "state sanitary agent."

Harvey traveled to many military hospitals along the lower Mississippi River, writing home to Wisconsin for more food, staff and clean supplies. She eventually met with President Abraham Lincoln to plead for a Soldier's Home hospital in Wisconsin, believing moving wounded soldiers north out of the hot southern climate would save lives and help wounded soldiers recover. Following the war, Harvey later founded an orphanage for the children of fallen Civil War soldiers.

WHS To Start History Discussion Group in March



Frank Penny, a Town of Farmington resident in the early 1900s, will be the first topic in March.

Do you like to learn about and discuss history? Would you like to know more about Waupaca's history?

Then join us in March as the Waupaca Historical Society holds its first meeting of the History Discussion Group. The group, led by local history enthusiast and emeritus board member

Gerald Chappell, will be held on the first Wednesday of each month. The first meeting of the group will be on Wednesday, March 1st at 2 p.m. in the lower-level meeting room at the Holly History and Genealogy Center.

March's discussion topic will be "The Manslaughter of Waupaca's Frank Penny." Materials for each discussion will be available the week leading up to the group meeting.

April's discussion topic will be "Chief Waupaca's Early Potawatomi Tribe and Chief Waupaca's Legend;" May's will be the "History of Early Waupaca."

The discussion group is free and open to the public. Hope to see you there!

At the Depot by Mike Kirk

We are excited to announce that with the help of a generous donation, we were able to purchase the Soo Line potato car that was reported on in the last issue of “The Reporter.” This is the last known Soo Line potato car and is currently located in Cameron, Wis. The car was built in 1948 and is a 40-foot steel refrigerator car with potato loading doors and ice bunkers at each end.

Depot volunteer Jim Payton and I went to Cameron this fall, where we met with the owner and inspected the car. The property is being sold, and the car needs to be moved.



Mike Kirk photo

Board member and Depot volunteer Jeff Weasner helps to lay tracks for the Soo Line potato car this fall. The car will arrive this spring, with plans to convert the inside into a display on Waupaca's potato industry.



Mike Kirk photo

The newly installed trolley line makes a nice addition to the model railroad display.

Once the purchase was made, volunteers Jeff Weasner, Roger Hildebrandt, Payton and I got down to work preparing a site behind the Milwaukee Road caboose on the Depot grounds. We laid 40 feet of track. I had the rail on hand and donated it to the project. I expect we will not get the car until spring. The seller is arranging the move, which also includes additional parts from the Twin Cities.

Once restoration work is completed on the Soo Line car, we plan to feature a permanent exhibit on Waupaca's potato industry. If you have potato-related objects or photographs to you would be willing to donate, please let us know!

We are also continuing to work on the model railroad in the Depot basement. We got a trolley line running and most recently installed a storm scene complete with thunder sounds and flashing lightning. Local artist Lisa Bonitez is continuing to paint the background scenery—she's done a nice job.

We have enjoyed all of the visitors at the Depot during our open days this winter. More than 40 people came for the last passenger train anniversary event held on January 15th. Look for more events and open hours at the Depot to come this winter!

Waupaca's National Guard Celebrates 100 Years: Part I

by J.J. Johnson

Many of us have fond memories of times spent in the Armory on Washington Street. It was a place for dances, sports, banquets, various special programs in addition to a meeting place for Scouts and much more. Today, it serves as part of Waupaca's police and fire departments.

Thanks to Waupaca's National Guard unit, this wonderful building and community gathering place exists and serves as a great reminder of the National Guard's presence in our city. 2017 marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of Waupaca's National Guard unit. In honor of this anniversary, the Waupaca Historical Society will share some of the unit's history in this two-part series.

The first mention found thus far regarding a National Guard in Waupaca was during the Spanish-American war. In August 1898, about 60 men were mustered into the 5th Regiment of the Wisconsin National Guard as Company C. This group came to be called "the Sampson Guard." The full list of officers and other members is available at the Holly History and Genealogy Center. This company was disbanded on May 10, 1899 after seemingly being inactive and not sending in any reports for six months. On a side note, during the Spanish-American War, Frank Dana, who grew up in Waupaca, was the leader of the 3rd Wisconsin Volunteer band, the first American band to play on Puerto Rico soil.

Our present National Guard unit traces its origins to World War I. Troubles in Europe began in 1914 and citizens in the United States followed the evolving war through newspapers. In 1916, Waupaca civic and church leaders began holding meetings for the purpose of obtaining a National Guard unit in Waupaca. The United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, and by June 6, 1917, Waupaca received permission to organize Company C of the 4th Regiment. It was placed under the leadership of Captain Clifford William (C.W.) Andrews, one of Waupaca's doctors, and was



The Waupaca National Guard Armory was built in 1930. The building, at 102 South Washington Street, now houses the city police and fire departments.

comprised of 185 men from Waupaca, Scandinavia, Weyauwega and Iola (Waupaca County), Almond, Belmont, Rosholt and New Hope (Portage County) and Wautoma (Waushara County). Dr. Andrews had enlisted in the Medical Reserve Corps in 1914 as a 1st Lieutenant and was promoted to captain in the infantry shortly before Waupaca was granted permission to form a National Guard unit. With no armory, operations were conducted out of The Print Shop, which was located on Waupaca's Main Street.

For training purposes, the men were divided into three groups that trained at Waupaca, Iola or Almond. The leaders of all three groups were from Waupaca—John McCabe, Loren Gmeiner and Bruce McCoy. Lt. Bruce McCoy began organizing and drilling the men right away. Practices were held three times a day: 9 a.m., 3 p.m. and again at 7 p.m. Practice was held on East Fulton Street, and several long hikes were made through the various city streets. The men drilled twice a day. As the men trained, large crowds of local citizens gathered to watch the unit's progression with pride and encouragement.

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Waupaca's National Guard (Continued from pg. 5)

According to the history maintained by Waupaca's National Guard unit, "all men who wanted to drill were welcome to attend" whether they were part of the unit or not.

The Company was called into service on July 15, 1917, at which time they were placed on the State of Wisconsin payrolls. The men earned \$5.00 a day plus meal tickets that could be used in the restaurants located in downtown Waupaca.

Captain Andrews remained at the head of the unit, but the promise that other officers would retain their ranks was not honored. Instead, those men were given non-commissioned officer positions after arriving at Camp Williams at Camp Douglas, Wis.

According to one source, on July 18, 1917, the War Department combined the Wisconsin and Michigan National Guard units into the 32nd Division, an action which was to be completed in late August or early September. Another source stated the organization of the

32nd Division was not completed until October 15, 1917.

Company C was changed from state control to federal service on August 5, 1917. The men were finally equipped and ordered to leave for Camp Williams via a special Soo Line train on August 11, 1917. The evening before they left the men were honored by the city with a banquet at Castle Hall, on the third floor of the National Bank building on the corner of Main and Union Streets. On Saturday morning, the men met at the drill grounds and marched to the High School (on School Street), down Main Street and on to the Soo Line Depot. They were escorted by members of the local Grand Army of the Republic and veterans from the Wisconsin Veterans' Home. The community was encouraged to be at the station to see the men off and special positions, close to the train, were reserved for soldiers' families.

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Friends, families and Waupaca residents gathered at the Soo Line Depot on August 11, 1917 to send off Waupaca's soldiers.

Waupaca's National Guard

(Continued from pg. 6)

At Camp Williams, soldiers received about two months of training before being sent to Waco, Texas as part of the 32nd "Red Arrow" Division. There they received advanced training before being sent to France.

At Waco, Captain Andrews was transferred to the Medical Reserve Corps Officer's Training Camp at Fort Riley, Kansas. He later returned to Texas to serve in the Medical Reserve Corps at Dallas. With Captain Andrews, the Company's sole officer, transferred, the men from Waupaca's National Guard were dispersed into various arms of the service. Many Waupaca soldiers, however, remained in the 32nd Division. When the War Department's artillery and infantry divisions inspected the 32nd Division in late 1917, they found that the 32nd was the most advanced unit in its training than any other division at that time.

In February 1918, the 32nd Division was ready to sail to France. Many were sent to Hoboken, New Jersey where they sailed for Brest, France. These troops served in five major offensives including Alsace, the Chateau Thierry on the Marne River and Argonne Forest.

A number of soldiers from what had been Company C sailed for France on the S.S. Tuscania, while most of the old Company sailed for France on February 5, 1918 from New York. On that same day, the Tuscania was torpedoed by a German submarine just off the north shores of Ireland. According to one account, many of the Waupaca National Guard unit narrowly escaped being on the Tuscania. The Tuscania had been sailing under a convoy of British war ships and was the first ship carrying U.S. troops to be sunk during the war.

Sixty-one men from the Waupaca area survived the Tuscania disaster. Their names, along with those that left Waupaca as part of Company C, can be found at the Holly Center.

Soldiers in the 32nd Division that sailed on that later ship saw substantial action in Europe.



A passenger train sits at the Depot (background), ready to take soldiers to Camp Williams in 1917.

At the end of July 1918, after fierce fighting over rough terrain and strongly held German positions, the 32nd Division forced the Germans to retreat and enabled French troops to move forward. The 32nd was not relieved from fighting on the front lines until August 7.

During that week of long, hard battles, the unit received its nickname "Les Terribles." When General de Mondesir of the 38th French Corps personally witnessed the consistent determination and success of the 32nd Division's battles against the Germans, he reportedly exclaimed, "Oui, Oui, Les soldats terrible, tres bien, tres bien!" General Mangin, who had heard of General de Mondesir's remark, used it when he requested the Division serve with the 10th French Army. The nickname became official when he used it while awarding all four Infantry regiments, all three artillery regiments and all three machine gun battalions of the 32nd Division the Croix de Guerre with Palm for their outstanding performance at Aisne-Marne. These units of the 32nd Division were the only National Guard units to be honored with this award during World War I and the 32nd was the only U.S. division to be given a nickname by any of the Allied nations during the war.

See our next newsletter for Part II.

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Interested in volunteering? Contact the Waupaca Historical Society today! We have many opportunities for volunteers, including cataloguing collections, serving as a tour guide and helping at the Waupaca Railroad Depot. Come volunteer with us today!

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The Waupaca Historical Society is a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. Its mission is to preserve, advance and disseminate knowledge of the history of the Waupaca area. The Waupaca Historical Society owns and operates the Holly History and Genealogy Center located at 321 S. Main Street, the Hutchinson House Museum and King Cottage located in South Park, and the Waupaca Train Depot located at 525 Oak Street.

Thank you for your support. We hope that you will come and enjoy the displays and resources at the Holly History and Genealogy Center and visit the Hutchinson House Museum, King Cottage and Waupaca Depot with your family and friends. Please check our website for our open days and times.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Thurs., Feb. 23rd, 6 p.m.	“The Red Mill on the Crystal” with local historian Ron Arthur
Thurs., March 23rd, 6 p.m.	“Cordelia Harvey, Angel in a Gray Bonnet” by Jessica Michna
Thurs., April 27th, 6 p.m.	“Barns of Wisconsin” with author Jerry Apps
Tues., May 9th, Noon	Lunch & Learn: “Not Just Old Stuff” with the Waupaca Historical Society (at the Waupaca Area Public Library)
Thurs., May 11th, 6 p.m.	“The Last Years of the Green Bay & Western” with John Gruber (at the Depot)
Sat., May 20th & Sun., May 21st, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.	Vietnam Living History Event (at the Depot)