

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 1

Winter 2018

From Nicaragua to Waupaca: Local Beekeeper to Speak on Work Near, Far

Local business owner and beekeeper Kent Pegorsch has a passion not only for beekeeping here in Waupaca, but thousands of miles away in Nicaragua.

On Thursday, February 22nd, Pegorsch will talk about this work abroad, along with beekeeping in Waupaca County, at the Holly History and Genealogy Center. His program, “Beekeeping: From Waupaca to the Jungles of



Kent Pegorsch

Nicaragua” will take place at 6 p.m.

In addition to his work on the Board of Directors at the Waupaca Historical Society, Pegorsch currently serves as the president of the Wisconsin Honey Producers Association and is active with the Waupaca County Beekeepers.

Refreshments at the program will be sponsored by Main Street Marketplace in Waupaca.

Another Year and Even More Appreciation

By Tracy Behrendt

Though the temperatures are still cold outside and the winter seems to have just started, there has been lots of activity inside the warmth of the Holly Center and Depot. And so much of that work is thanks to our volunteers. Our group of dedicated volunteers works throughout the year, whether it is opening our buildings, shoveling the sidewalks or researching local history.

While I work two days a week at the Holly Center, so much of what we do at the Waupaca Historical Society wouldn't be possible without our great group of volunteers. And though it's easy to get caught up in the gloominess of another cold winter, I, and the Waupaca Historical Society, have so much for which to be thankful. I wanted to take time to say thank you to those volunteers that help us continue our mission to preserve Waupaca's history and share it with others—you all are so important to us and to the Waupaca community!



Eric Percy (right) gives a program on Jan. 18th on the Battle of the Bulge. Volunteers make these monthly programs possible—from presentations to refreshments.

First, thank you to Jeff Weasner, who keeps our sidewalks and grounds immaculate through the snow and ice. Thank you also to Jeff and Dennis Lear who set up chairs each month for our programs.

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At the Depot: A New Year, A New Ceiling

By Mike Kirk



The Depot basement has a new ceiling, thanks to our hard-working volunteers and to Noffke Lumber.

I had the week off work between Christmas and New Year's, so I took advantage of the time to work on installing a ceiling in the Depot basement. We decided to use a suspended ceiling with a 3½-inch drop for access to the wiring and plumbing. The pattern we chose has the look of old metal tiles. Steve Noffke at Noffke Lumber gave us a nice discount on the

price of the tiles. The project proceeded smoothly with the help of Brian Godfrey, Brett Peterson, Jim Payton and Jeff Weasner. The many curved valances made the job a little more challenging, but it turned out looking very nice.

I want to thank Brian Godfrey for donating three wooden filing cabinets. He used to use them for his insurance business. Jan Schroeder is refinishing them. They will fit in nicely with the look of the Depot and will be a big improvement over the metal cabinets and cardboard boxes we are currently using.

Jeff Weasner and his helpers had the Depot open Saturday afternoons during the month of December. He decorated for the holidays and ran Christmas trains in the basement. Santa Claus even made an appearance on two of the days, which the children loved. Thank you to everyone that made our open hours possible!

Another Year and Even More Appreciation

(Continued from p. 1)

Thank you to Mike Kirk, Brian Godfrey and the other tireless Depot volunteers that recently installed the new roof in the basement of the Depot—it looks wonderful!

Thank you to J.J. Johnson who works every Thursday to open the Holly Center's doors and always is willing to help us with the next research request. Thank you to Ashlie Buck, who volunteers nearly every Friday, creates our program flyers and assists with exhibits at the Holly Center. Thank you to Betty Stewart and Marge Writt for getting refreshments ready at every program and making sure visitors have enough coffee and treats!

Thank you to Nancy Weasner and the WAGS volunteers for being wonderful collaborators and being willing to always find another way to work together. They help us keep our doors open on Saturdays in the summer as well.

Throughout the summer months and during school tours, we are so grateful for our volunteers at both the Hutchinson House and Depot that give tours and share their love of Waupaca's history with our visitors. A big thanks, too, to our presenters who donate their time and happily lead our programs. And finally thank you to everyone else I have forgotten to mention—you are all integral to WHS, and we are so thankful for you!

Finally, thanks to all of you that continue to support the Waupaca Historical Society, either through your time, your generous donations or by attending a program. We are so grateful for your dedication to preserving Waupaca's history and your continued support of the Waupaca Historical Society. We wish you a wonderful 2018 and hope to see you at our next program!

Thank You for Your Support in 2017!

In November, the Waupaca Historical Society mailed its annual fundraising letter to its members—and we are so thankful for all of your support! Thanks to your generous donations, the Waupaca Historical Society raised more than \$2,500. This money will go toward several projects in 2018:

- Purchase archival storage supplies to properly store and preserve Waupaca's history
- Paint the Hutchinson House exterior
- Repair and/or replace the Holly Center and Hutchinson House roofs
- Improve the lower level of the Holly History and Genealogy Center
- Purchase supplies for upcoming exhibitions at the Holly Center
- Continue offering our monthly programming at the Holly Center

We want to thank each and every one of you for your generous donations, whether it was at the beginning of 2017 or for our annual membership fundraising letter at the end of the year. With the help of donors like you, we maintain our four historic buildings—the Holly History & Genealogy Center, Hutchinson House Museum, King Cottage and Waupaca Railroad Depot—and work to preserve the Waupaca area's history through collecting, programming and research.

Donations for Annual Fundraising Appeal

Joseph Bauknecht
Andy and Tracy Behrendt (in memory of Bob Kessler)
Paula Botan (in memory of the Barnhart and Buck families)
Gerald Brown
Jeff and Danielle Brown (in memory of Audrey Brown)
Janet Buetow (in memory of Bob Kessler)
Glen Bullick and Patti Kile

Chris and Peg Burington
David Dresia
Vera Duesterbeck (in memory of Barbara Schuler)
Steve and Deb Fenske
Mary and James Fico
Brian and Sharon Godfrey
Janet Hanke (in honor of Barbara Fay Wiese)
John and Karen Hebbbring
John and Julie Hintz (in memory of Bob Kessler)
Pat Hollenbeck (in memory of Warren Hollenbeck)
Merlin Horn
Steve and Jacki Johnson
Betty Kessler (in memory of Bob Kessler)
Charles Larson
Dennis and Laurie Lear
Wendell McHenry, Jr.
Barbara Miller
Carl and Arline Nell
Joan and Richard Niemiec
Rob and Lynn Nimmer (in memory of Bob Kessler)
Jane Nispel
Karren Pettit (in memory of Philip Richard Pettit, Sr.)
Linda Pope
Ron and Rose Marie Reynolds
Carol Rolefson
Romy and Roger Rupnow (in memory of William C. Larson)
Greg and Betsy Russell
Ruth Seward
Smith and Radke Accounting
Adrienne Sosinske
Betty Stewart (in memory of the women of the former Waupaca Women's Club)
Sharon Stratton (in memory of Olive (Stratton) Tink, Roscoe S. Stratton and Steven J. Stratton)
Richard E. Townsend (in memory of Evan Townsend)
Ken and Judy Trudeau (in memory of Bob Kessler)
Gene Wasserberg
Dr. Robert Wubben

Local History, Quilts Focus of Spring Programs

For the Waupaca Historical Society, the new year brings a new slate of monthly programs at the Holly History and Genealogy Center.

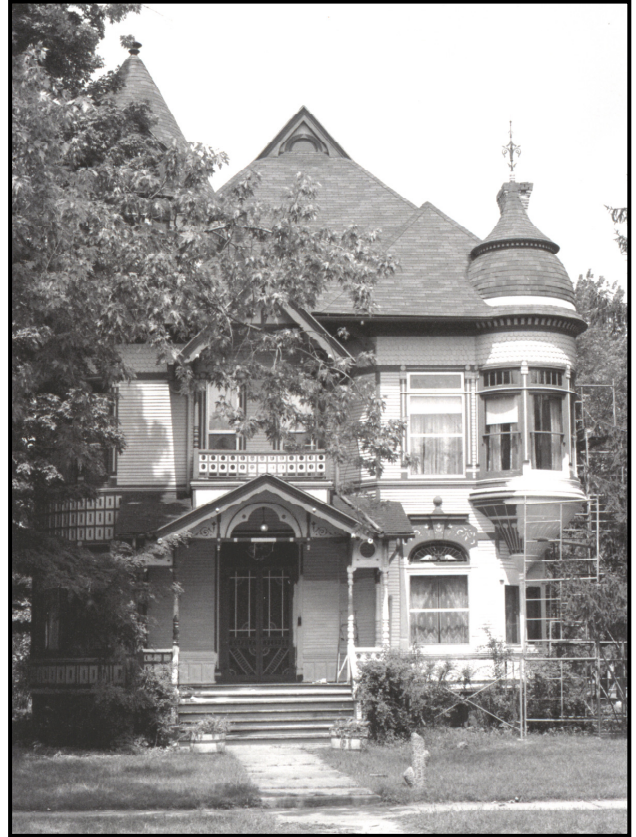
On Thursday, March 15th, the Waupaca Historical Society will present, “The Story of General Charles King,” with Russell Horton of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. The program will focus on General King, the namesake of the area of King where some of the Chain O’Lakes and the Wisconsin Veterans Home reside.

Civil War quilts will be the subject of the Thursday, April 19th program with Alison Rainboth, entitled, “Quilts of the Past: The Civil War.” Rainboth, a quilt historian and judge, will talk about the stories behind Civil War quilts in her collections and the fabrics and techniques used to make these works of art.

On Thursday, May 17th, Scott Christie, chairman of Waupaca’s Historic Preservation Commission, will present, “Historic Homes of Waupaca.” Christie will focus on the history and architecture of the many beautiful homes in the city of Waupaca

All programs will take place at 6 p.m. in the lower level of the Holly Center. Refreshments will also be served.

The Waupaca Historical Society is also looking for individuals, families or businesses to sponsor our 2018 programs. Those interested can sponsor a presenter and/or refreshments each month. Sponsorships range from \$50 to



The Christy House on Lake Street, pictured in 1987, was built in 1891-92 and has been fully restored. It is an example of the Queen Anne Style and cost \$10,000 to build.

\$300. If you are interested in becoming a sponsor and making a tax-deductible donation toward an upcoming program, please contact us at director@waupacahistoricalsociety.com.

Waupaca Historical Society 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, contact Tracy at (715) 256-9980 or director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org.

Slate chalkboards for children (\$30)
Fabric for children’s activities (\$25)
Historical books for children (\$50-\$100)
Display materials (\$25-\$100)
Polyester batting
Plain muslin fabric
Wooden hangers

Coffee carafes (2) (\$40 each)
Long white cloth tablecloths (\$25 each)
iPad for historic photos (\$200)
iPad stand (\$100)

Masonic Lodge 123: Waupaca's First Fraternal Organization

By J.J. Johnson

The first fraternal organization in Waupaca was the Free and Accepted Masons. In 1859 there were at least 11 settlers who belonged to the Mason organization in other areas, were living near Waupaca, and wanted to form a lodge. A petition was sent to Grand Master Luther Tracy, who granted a dispensation in February 1860.

The men held their first meeting under a dispensation on March 13th to organize Waupaca's Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. The charter members at that time were: Linus B. Brainard (elected Worshipful Master), Samuel A. Tinkham (elected Senior Warden), Evan Townsend (elected Junior Warden), William H. Cameron (elected secretary), Asa Worden (elected treasurer), John Minton (elected Tiler), Melvin H. Bailey, Henry Minton, William S. Pitcher, Robert D. Roberts and David Scott. The meeting was attended by Brother Joel Newell of Berlin, Wis., who became the first instructor for the Lodge. Seven members each donated 25 cents to offset costs for fuel and lights in the building



Linus B. Brainard

and to purchase an Altar Bible for \$2.25.

The members also granted its first degree to Attorney E.L. Browne, who on April 11th, 1860 became the Lodge's first Master Mason.

The actual charter was officially issued by the Grand Lodge on June 12th, 1860. The officers remained the same, though Minton and Cameron exchanged positions. In addition, they elected Edward L. Browne as Senior Deacon and Erastus E. Blinn as Junior Deacon. During the first nine months

of the Masons' existence, only five members were added to the organization's rolls.

The newly formed Masons lodge was instituted July 25th by Grand Lecturer Melvin L. Young who presided as the Acting Grand Master. He installed the officers and officially instituted Waupaca's Mason organization.

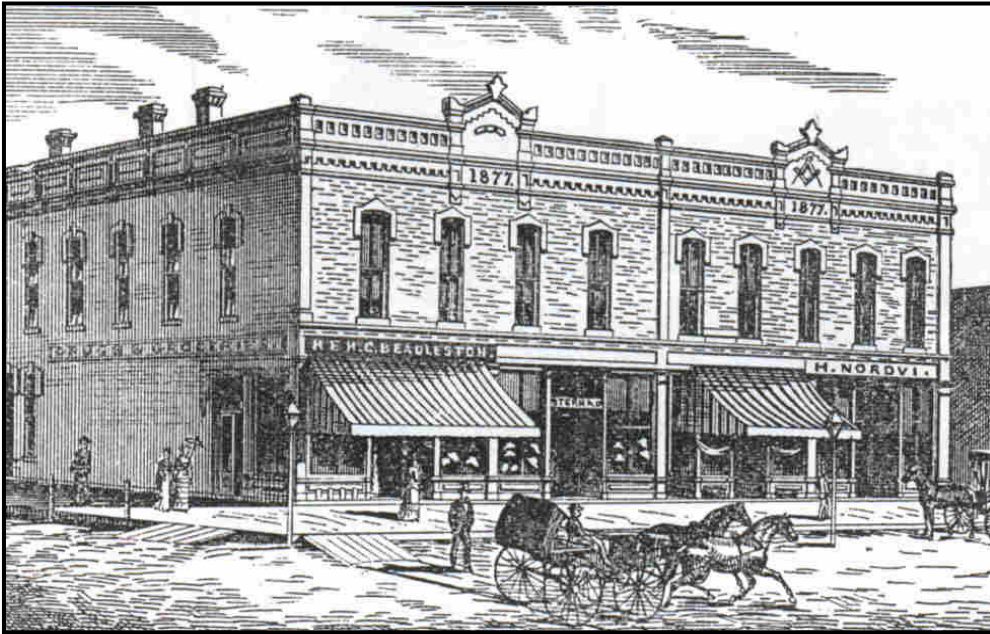
These early meetings were held in Waupaca's Goth Hall, which was located near the northeast corner of Jefferson and Union Streets. Goth Hall (often referred to as Gothic Hall) was used for civic meetings, school classes, church sessions and, after April 15th, 1853, when the county board ordered the removal of the county seat from Mukwa to Waupaca, this building was designated for holding county meetings and circuit court. As a note, the erection of the official county courthouse, which was always called Gothic Hall, was started on Waupaca's public square in the winter of 1855.

"Goth Hall", which continued to be used by the Masonic Lodge, burned down on January 1st, 1861. By April this structure had been rebuilt, and the Masons were able to resume their meetings at this site on the 23rd. At the April meeting it was found that the lodge not only did not have any existing funds but had some outstanding indebtedness. Through their efforts, their debts were cleared and on May 10th, 1864 they were able to establish a committee to look into purchasing a location to hold their meetings. Toward this goal a \$5.00 assessment was made to each of its then 16 members. On May 12th, 1864 the organization purchased and refurbished a frame building on Main Street. This building was among the structures destroyed in a fire on Feb. 19th, 1877.

A new building was quickly started. To cover the costs of rebuilding their meeting hall, the members were assessed an amount not to exceed \$10.00, which was then applied toward their membership dues. While the building was being erected, they accepted an offer from Waupaca's International Order of Odd Fellows to meet in the I.O.O.F. building.

Continued on p. 6

Masonic Lodge 123 (Continued from p. 5)



Waupaca's Masonic Lodge 123 built this Italianate-style building in 1877. Today, the Masons still meet on the second level. Stratton's Drug Store occupies the first level.

The new Mason Lodge 123 meeting hall, shown above, was dedicated for use on December 21, 1877 and continues to serve the organization to this day at 105½ Main Street.

Since the dedication, there have been a number of improvements made. Electricity was added in September 1891 through a gift from the Royal Arch Masons, which had been organized on June 22, 1868 (Waupaca Chapter No. 39). Water was installed in March 1899, and the building was connected to the city's sewer system in 1902. Hot water became available in December 1903, and a telephone was installed in March 1905. In April 1920 the building was given a cement floor in the basement.

In 1902, the entire building was extended to the west. The old Cary oil burner was updated with a coal burning furnace in 1929 and, in 1940, the entire building received new store fronts.

On April 26, 1898, a dispensation was granted to allow a Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star to meet in the Masonic Hall. The first ladies' social was then held on March 2, 1899.

As of June 24, 1919, cuspidors or spittoons were no longer allowed in various areas of the Lodge, including the Lodge room, reception room or preparation room.

Over the years, the building has also been refurbished and redecorated a number of times, with kitchen and dining areas added or improved. In 1957, for Waupaca's centennial celebration, the Masons again remodeled the Lodge. The Lodge now consists of a meeting room, kitchen, dining

room, lobby, preparation room and an office for the secretary, making it a comfortable gathering place for its members.

A major goal of the Masons is "to make good men better." The Masons have taken pride in its efforts to aid those fraternal brothers when situations arise. During the early years of their organization, the Waupaca Masons addressed a number of issues. Relief aid was sent to those affected by the great fires of Chicago and Peshtigo in 1871, and to help brethren in Kansas suffering as a result of the destruction caused by the grasshoppers in 1875. Aid was also sent to numerous other emergency situations, including those in Hurley in December 1893, in Black River Falls in November 1911 and in Florida in October 1920.

Today, the Waupaca Masonic Lodge 123 continues to evolve into a more philanthropic organization that meets twice a month—the second and fourth Tuesdays, with the exception of the summer months when meetings are temporarily suspended.

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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. 22nd, 6 p.m.	“Beekeeping in Waupaca” with Kent Pegorsch
Thurs., March 15th, 6 p.m.	“The Story of General Charles King” with Russ Horton, Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Thurs., April 19th, 6 p.m.	“Quilts of the Past: The Civil War” with Alison Rainboth
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 Jack Koehler

Staff:

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President: Dennis Lear; *Vice President/Depot Volunteer:* Mike Kirk; *Secretary:* Betty Stewart; *Treasurer:* Dave Trombla
Marge Witt, Ron Arthur, Nancy and Jeff Weasner, Kent Pegorsch, Ashlie Buck, J.J. Johnson, Brian Godfrey

City Council Representative: Lori Chesnut

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