

THE REPORTER

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

VOLUME 24 – NUMBER 2

Spring 2020

Future of Summer Season Unknown, But We'll Be Ready!

On April 16, Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers extended the “Safer at Home” order through Tuesday, May 26. At the Waupaca Historical Society, that extension not only means the Holly History and Genealogy Center will remain closed but that the Waupaca Historical Society’s summer season will be put on hold.

Memorial Day weekend is typically the kick-off for the summer open season at the Hutchinson House Museum in South Park and the Waupaca Depot. The Depot had also been scheduled to open on Saturdays in April and May, but this also had been cancelled due to the state order.

In addition, all programs and rentals at the Holly Center have been postponed or cancelled. The April program on Waupaca’s Masonic Lodge and the May program on Whispering Pines Park have been cancelled. Both will be rescheduled for later dates. For updates on when the Waupaca Historical Society will open to the public, like WHS’s Facebook page and check out its website.



The summer season for the Hutchinson House (above) and the Depot are on hold for now due to COVID-19.

Help WHS Preserve Local History During the Pandemic



The time we are currently living in is certainly one Waupaca residents will not forget—quarantines at home, businesses closed temporarily, and students schooled at home and online.

And though it is difficult to look toward the future at this point, the Waupaca Historical Society wants you to do just that. In five, 10 or 50 years, residents of Waupaca will look back at this time as historic—a period that will appear life-changing or community-changing.

With that in mind, WHS is encouraging members of our community to collect items related to the COVID-19 pandemic and donate them once the “Safer at Home” order is lifted.

Items that tell the story of this time will help teach future generations about this pandemic. These items could be mailed items, photographs, signs, newspapers, home projects, school work or homemade face masks. From local businesses, special menus, order tickets, specific supplies ordered and photographs are important items to preserve. Please help WHS preserve our present history and make these available for future generations!

Remember When...
***Charming Waupaca: A Description of a Beautiful and Attractive Wisconsin
Summer Resort—the Lay of the Land***
Waupaca Republican, June 2, 1882

“Undoubtedly, no summer resort in the State has advanced more than Waupaca has, in high esteem of tourists and pleasure seekers. Situated as it is in the midst of a fruitful and beautiful farming country which is not wholly reclaimed from a state of nature, and surrounded by rivers and lakes on every side, the attractions offered for a quiet, pleasant recreation from the toils and heat of the city are truly manifold. Waupaca itself is small, (having a population of less than 2,000) the streets are wide, clean and abundantly shaded; the business places, residences, hotels and all, denote a degree of prosperity that at once favorably impresses strangers with the city. The people are hospitable, generous, refined and educated. Verily, the saying “a stranger in a strange land,” would never be thought of in Waupaca; it is home, it is comfort.

“But perhaps it would be much better to tell of the boating, the camping, the bathing. To be plain, abundant facilities are offered for all these enjoyments. The fishing in the lakes could scarcely be improved; it is no trouble at all to go out to catch a boat load—depending entirely upon the size of the boat; pickerel, black bass, perch and trout predominate. The shores and banks are most beautifully adapted to camping, picnicking and bathing. On every hand dense forests are seen; the trees are all there; no wood chopper with an axe in hand has ruthlessly cut away the mighty oaks and shady elms and maples; the lofty pines appear upon the jutting points, that stretch far out in the lake in bold relief; everything seems to say: “I am perfect, for I am just as nature made me.”

“But it is impossible to describe a summer resort that has been made entirely so by nature. Two and a half miles from the city are over a dozen beautiful lakes, ranging in size from one to five miles, in circumference, and all connected by natural channels of running

water. These lakes, which two years ago were almost unknown to the pleasure seekers outside of Waupaca, are now spoken of as the “Chain o’ Lakes,” and their reputation is spreading, and the interest in them becoming so great that the quiet people of Waupaca are becoming quite surprised at their notoriety. Waupaca and the “Chain o’ Lakes,” is decidedly not a fashionable resort. A blue flannel suit for either ladies or gentlemen, from one week’s end to the other, is the rule and not the exception. The accommodations are not grand and expensive, but rather plain. A person gets his money’s worth every time and doesn’t feel that \$5 is being paid for something that is really worth but \$2.

“The climate is extremely healthful; no malaria was ever heard of in this locality. The soil is more of a sandy loam than anything else; there are no marshes, no dense fogs. The lakes are composed of hundreds of springs, and the water is as pure and clear as the dew. There is no visible inlet to any of these lakes except these numerous springs. In some places the water is so clear that from a boat on the surface objects on the bottom can easily be distinguished at a depth of 80 feet. One very peculiar and attractive feature of the “Chain o’ Lakes” is the changeable color of the waters. The effect of a wind on a sunny day produces the most charming view. The water seems to change into all conceivable colors, from a dark blue or almost black to a light blue, and from that gradually to a beautiful bronze, then to a yellow with a long band of orange on the further side. By taking a shay seat on the elevated banks, or perhaps on some high promontory that stretches far out into the lake, a person can pleasantly spend the greater part of an afternoon in simply watching the varying hues upon the waters.

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At the Depot: Flooring Nearing Completion

By Mike Kirk

Laying the maple armory flooring in the basement is nearing completion. It has been an all-winter project. The main room is basically done with only parts of the area under the smoking room and the office remaining at the time of this writing. I have had some very good help from Brian Godfrey but much of the time I work alone. I guess it is a good place to shelter from the coronavirus! I calculate we will lay approximately 7,000 boards before it is finished.

We received two nice donations recently. Adam Johnson gave us some railroad keys and locks that had belonged to his grandfather who worked for the railroad. Most of them had names that were significant in the history of the railroad through Waupaca.

Shirley Yaeger recently donated a railroad pocket watch, which had belonged to Bob Dunbar. Bob, who lived in Weyauwega, gave her the watch. The watch had belonged to Bob's father, who had worked for the railroad. We did



This recently donated pocket watch will be displayed at the Depot.

not have a pocket watch at the Depot, and I had been hoping to get one some day. Keeping time was an essential part of railroading. The story of railroad times is a fascinating one in itself. These days most people do not realize it, but before railroads there was no such thing as standard time. One person or community could use a time different from its neighbor. The railroads needed standard times to keep track of train schedules and developed the system we use today.

Though the work in the lower level has kept us busy, we look forward to opening the Depot to the public. However, with the COVID-19 restrictions, we do not know exactly when we will be able to open at this time. You can still park in the driveway and watch trains pass the

Depot. With the current sheltering restrictions, we also get lots of visits on YouTube and Facebook. We are fortunate we were able to install Virtual Railfan last year. Check out the Waupaca Historical Society's website and look for the Depot page—there you will find the link to the Virtual Railfan page. Log in and leave us a comment—we'd love to hear from you!

Remember When...

Charming Waupaca

(Continued from p. 2)

"The lakes are frequently dotted with islands upon which cottages and boathouses have already been built. One desirable feature of the "Chain o' Lakes" is the general quiet of the waters, no sudden squalls ever come upon the boatman and unceremoniously capsize his boat; on this account it is that boating by even women and children can be enjoyed without any prospect of disastrous results. One thing that might be spoken of in this connection is the seven newly discovered mineral springs upon the land owned by Dr. G. H. Calkins. The water contains ingredients of a very health-giving and valuable nature and have actually cured several severe cases of dropsy. Dr. Calkins is a physician of many years experience, and he makes the positive assertion that the water from one of these springs contains more diuretic properties than any medicine he has ever tried. No analysis has ever been made of this water but its curative powers are an admitted fact, and it will soon take its place alongside of Bethesda and other mineral waters which are in no manner its superiors. These springs are bound to become almost a household word wherever dropsy or kidney disease are known.

"The hotels at Waupaca consist of the Vosburg House, Lewis House and "The Waupaca," at any of which first-class accommodations can be obtained at reasonable rates. Private boarding houses in the city can provide quieter life than can be had at a public house."

Habitat for Humanity's Rock the Block on Hold



On May 7-9, Habitat for Humanity had planned to host “Rock the Block” in Waupaca. The goal of the event was to make meaningful and impactful change in Waupaca. This work was to be focused in the Third Ward. Along with these community repairs and improvements, the Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity had also committed to several community projects, one of which was improvements and work at the Waupaca Historical Society. Work was to be done at all four locations— from garden and yard clean-up to fence repairs.

Because of COVID-19, Habitat for Humanity has postponed the “Rock the Block” event until a later date in 2020. Some residential projects have already been started and completed. Some exterior projects will be continued as the state allows, but for now, most projects have been postponed. The organization is hoping to hold a celebration event, along with completing work projects, in last summer or fall.

Though this event is on hold for now, it will still happen! The Waupaca Historical Society will still have these projects completed in 2020 and will be looking for volunteers. If you already offered to volunteer, we have your information and will contact you when the time comes. If you are interested in volunteering and have not yet contacted us, feel free to email us at director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org. The Waupaca Historical Society will pass along more information to members as it becomes available.

We look forward to being a part of “Rock the Block” in 2020 and getting out in the community together again soon!

Need a Good Book or DVD? Order from WHS Today!

The Holly Center may be closed to the public, but books and DVDs from our gift shop are still available for pick-up or shipping!

Looking for a great local history book or new DVD to watch at home? The Waupaca Historical Society has numerous items to choose from, from local history topics to books by local author Jerry Apps. You can find all of these titles listed on our website at www.waupacahistoricalsociety.org under “Gift Shop.”

If you are interested in ordering an item, leave a message at (715) 256-9980 or email us at director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org. We are also offering free curbside pick-up at the Holly Center on Fridays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. We are also happy to ship items to you.

Shop Online? You Can Support WHS, Too!

During this time of COVID-19, many of us are finding new ways to get the food and supplies we need at home. We encourage you all to shop local and use curbside pick-up if possible. This not only supports our local businesses but also supports our local workers and keeps our economy in Waupaca strong!

If you need to shop online for other items, please consider shopping on Amazon.com through Amazon Smile! This is a great way to not only get what you need but also support the Waupaca Historical Society!

Amazon.com operates AmazonSmile, a website with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation donates 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. All you have to do is visit smile.amazon.com and select the Waupaca Historical Society!



A Look Back: Streets of Waupaca Part II

At the Holly History and Genealogy Center, staff and volunteers receive two to three research requests per day (even in this time of “Safer at Home!”). Researchers often inquire about the history of Waupaca’s street names, ranging from numbers to trees and animals. Many of the streets are also named after former prominent citizens.

In 1961, the World History Class at the Waupaca High School researched the city’s street names, putting together a small book. This book, along with several other high school history projects, can be found at the Holly Center today.

The book, entitled “Streets of Waupaca,” tells the history behind numerous streets.

“BROWNE STREET

“By Mary Gary Roberts

“E.L. Browne was born at Granville, Washington County, N.Y., June 27, 1830. He worked on his father’s farm and attended school until he was 15 years of age, when he moved with his father to Wisconsin, settling on a farm in Milwaukee County. After the first year there, Mr. Browne spent much of his time for three years at the select school of Amasa Buck, Milwaukee. Commencing to read law at 19 years of age, he was admitted to the bar at Fond du Lac in 1851, practicing first at Dubuque, Iowa, and afterwards spending a year in Milwaukee. In November 1852, he settled in Waupaca. He was state senator from this district for two terms, in 1861-62 and in 1867-68. Though a new member in 1861, he took an active

part in all matters...pertaining to the war... No man in the senate showing more patriotic enthusiasm in that regard. He was on the judiciary committee during the four sessions, being its chairman in 1868. He was defeated for Congress in 1862, because 3,000 Republicans from his district were in the army. He was a delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1868. Mr. Browne was a Royal Arch Mason, and has been Master of Waupaca Lodge No. 123, F., and A.M. In the campaign of 1888, Mr. Browne was a candidate for the congressional nomination in the Ninth District. He received the support of the county delegation, but was defeated in the convention.

“This little street connects South Main and Washington Streets and was named for E.L. Browne. The street was supposed to go clear through to High Street, but it was never completed.

Continued on p. 6



E.L. Browne lived in this home on South Main Street, likely on the 500th block, until 1919, when he moved in with his daughter Jennie Truesdell at 702 S. Main Street. The E. L. Browne home is now gone.

Waupaca's Street Names Tell History of City

(Continued from p. 5)

"There are no homes facing the street, but it is right next to the Tom Browne residence. The E.L. Browne home stood on the lot which is now the Atkinson land on South Main."

"DEMAREST STREET

"By Marge Boutwell and LuAnne Robbins

"Demarest Street in Waupaca was named after Edson L. Demarest, a Civil War veteran, who owned all the land from Berlin Street to the Weyauwega Road. All the land extending east, north, and south from a block north of Demarest Street, and as far south as the bridge on Berlin Street was his.

"Mr. Demarest came to Waupaca from Lima, Ohio in the late 1800s. In 1905, he was a rural mail carrier on Route 5 near the Crystal River. Edson and his father John J. Demarest also operated a furniture store, and drove the hearse for burial.

"The barn where he kept his horses for his mail carrier's job, his six or seven cows, and his other small livestock is still standing at 786 Berlin Street. The Demarest [residence] is located at that address also. Most of the land along Demarest Street was used for raising strawberries. The Demarest family was considered to be sort of Aristocrats, and because of their ownership of this land, when the city decided to put a street here, they naturally called it Demarest. The Street was originally named Demarest Avenue, but they decided that Avenue was too fancy; and so it is Demarest Street today. Most of the land that the Demarest family owned has been sold. The Riverside Memorial Hospital is located on some of it. The new Methodist Church will also be located on part of it."

"HIBBARD STREET

"By Todd Fonstad

"In July of 1848 a party, consisting of W.B. and Joseph Hibbard and E.C. Sessions, started northward from Plymouth, Wisconsin. Moving along the east shore of Lake Winnebago, they

crossed the Wolf River at or above Mukwa and through wanderings stumbled upon the future site of Waupaca. They settled here because of the beauty of the area and available waterpower.

"The two Hibbards were active in early government, thus their name was used as the name of a street in the Third Ward. W.B. Hibbard was the city clerk from 1859 to 1862. He also owned an office where the early officials met. Joseph Hibbard was a village trustee in 1859 and in 1870 was elected Village Marshall.

"Mary Hibbard, daughter of Joseph Hibbard, born at Waupaca May 25, 1850, was the first white child born in the county."

"HIGH STREET AND BALLARD STREET

"By Nancy Woodliff and Kathy Caldwell

"High Street was named for its elevation over the other streets of Waupaca, but it is not the highest street in this city as Mt. Tom is the highest elevation..."

"The street which is now Ballard Street was once named North Elm Street. It was named Ballard Street in 1953. The street is believed to be named after Frank Ballard. Mr. Ballard was a horse peddler who settled near the railroad because the horses he bought came from the West. He sold the horses downtown near the spot of Dr. Salan's office today. He was born in 1865 and died in 1937 at the age of 72. The house he lived in is still standing.

"Another possibility for naming the street is after Orville Ballard, a son of Frank Ballard. Orville died in World War I, and was the first casualty from Waupaca in World War I. This is the reason why it is believed to be named after him.

"We obtained our information about Frank Ballard from his grandson Clinton Ballard. The information about Orville Ballard was obtained from Mrs. Rob Holly, and the date of naming Ballard Street from Mrs. Lee Fuhrman, a daughter of Frank Ballard."

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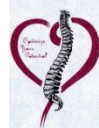


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321 S. Main Street
Waupaca, WI 54981

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

Thurs., June 25, 6 p.m.	“Waupaca’s Masons and Masonic Lodge”
Sat., July 4	4 th of July Fundraiser at Holly Center (before and during the parade)
Thurs., July 23 , 6 p.m.	“In All the World, No Lakes Like These: Images of the Waupaca Chain O’Lakes” with author Zachary Bishop
Thurs., August 13, 6 p.m.	“One Room Schools: Stories from the Days of 1 Room, 1 Teacher, 8 Grades” with author Susan Apps-Bodilly
Thurs., September 10, 6 p.m.	“Waupaca’s Granite Quarry” with Mike Kirk (AT THE DEPOT)

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