

THE REPORTER

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

Open Wednesday-Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

VOLUME 26 – NUMBER 3

Summer/Fall 2022

New Outdoor Signs Mark WHS Sites

The Waupaca Historical Society's three sites now have new building signs.

For more than a year, WHS staff and Board members have been working with Appleton Sign Company to create new signage to connect all three WHS locations. The signs were part of an effort to more clearly identify the Holly History and Genealogy Center, Hutchinson House Museum, and Depot as part of the Waupaca Historical Society.

If you haven't had a chance to see the new signs, stop by any of our three locations and check them out! Landscaping beneath all three signs will be completed this fall.



The Waupaca Historical Society recently installed a monument sign outside the Hutchinson House near the entrance to South Park.

Waupaca's Post Office Mural Part of Upcoming Program

In June 1939, Waupaca welcomed the opening of the first federally owned post office in the city. The post office was built through the Public Works Administration and, by 1940, a mural was added above the postmaster's door.

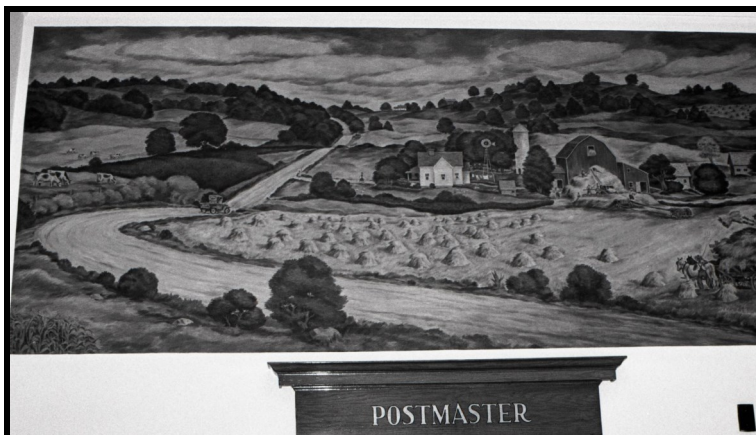
Waupaca's post office mural, along with 34 others in the state, will be subject of the next monthly program at the Waupaca Historical Society. Author David W. Gates, Jr. will present, "Wisconsin's Post Office Murals" on Thursday, August 18 at 6 p.m. at the Holly History and Genealogy Center.

David W. Gates Jr., is a post office enthusiast and award-winning author who has

traveled thousands of miles nationwide in search of historic post office buildings and art. He blogs about his work at www.postofficefans.com. His program will detail the little-known history of the 35 commissioned post office murals in Wisconsin, how they were developed, and the artists behind them. Gates, Jr. will have books available for purchase after the program.

The program will take place in the lower level of the

Holly Center at 321 S. Main Street. This program is sponsored by Michelle Peterson (in memory of David Dresia), Janet Buetow (in memory of Karl Buetow), Waupaca Foundry, Pat Hollenbeck (in memory of Warren Hollenbeck), Beiser Realty, and F. Thomas and Hope Olson.



Waupaca Historical Society Completes First Capital Campaign Project

After several years of patches and fixes, the Waupaca Historical Society installed a new roof on the Holly History and Genealogy Center. The roof was the first project to be completed thanks to generous donations to the Capital Campaign.

The Waupaca Historical Society also received a grant from the City of Waupaca's Building Repair Grant program for the roof project. The grant covered half of the cost of the roof project, which amounted to \$20,402. The new roof was installed by K&E Builders.

A lighter shingle was chosen for the new roof to more closely match the original shingles installed on the Carnegie library in 1913-1914.

What is the Capital Campaign?

Since 1953, the Waupaca Historical Society has worked to preserve the rich history of Waupaca and the Chain O'Lakes. What began as efforts to preserve one of the oldest buildings in the City of Waupaca has grown to include the preservation of four sites and four buildings, an ever-growing artifact and archival collection, and monthly programs and community outreach. WHS has become a community partner with the City of Waupaca, the Waupaca School District, library, local businesses, and numerous arts and cultural organizations. We serve as a historical resource for our community and researchers and are an advocate for preserving our local history and stories for future generations.

This year, the Waupaca Historical Society embarks on its first Capital Campaign. Our fundraising goal of \$400,000 will help us preserve and enhance our four buildings—the Holly History and Genealogy Center, the Hutchinson House Museum and King Cottage, and the Railroad Depot.

How can you help?

We invite you to be a part of the Waupaca Historical Society's expanding preservation efforts and educational outreach. In its nearly 70 years, the WHS collection has grown to four sites, four historic buildings and more than 10,000 objects.

This campaign is about more than the buildings and



A new roof on the Holly Center (above) more closely resembles the original roof on the Carnegie library (below).



collections we preserve—it is about the stories, the connections, our role in the community and building for our future. Your support—no matter how much—will make a difference and help WHS grow in the ways we preserve local history, educate the public, and reach and serve the community.

Have questions?

Please feel free to stop in at the Holly Center during open hours or give us a call! We are all passionate about the projects and the Waupaca Historical Society's growing role in the community.

How do I donate to the Campaign?

Donations can be made on our website at www.waupacahistoricalsociety.org/capitalcampaign or by mailing a check to: WHS, c/o Capital Campaign, 321 S. Main Street, Waupaca, WI 54981. Thank you for helping us honor our community's past by embracing the future!

Volunteers Needed for Brat Fry on August 19

August is here, and so is Arts on the Square in Waupaca!

This year, the Waupaca Historical Society will be holding a brat fry at the Arts on the Square Street Dance on Friday night, August 19. The brat fry will run from 5-10 p.m., and we are in need of volunteers!

Volunteers are needed at the two shifts that evening—5-7:30 p.m. and 7:30-10 p.m. Volunteers will assist with taking and fulfilling orders. All volunteers also receive a free meal.

If you are able to volunteer, please contact Tracy



Behrendt at 715-256-9980 or director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org as soon as possible. Thank you for your support!

Annual Meeting Set for Sept. 8 at Depot



The Waupaca Historical Society will hold its Annual Meeting on Thursday, September 8 at 5 p.m. at the historic Waupaca Depot.

Members and their guests are encouraged to attend and bring a dish to pass for the potluck meal. Hamburgers and brats, along with beverages, will be provided. A meeting detailing the last year's activities and finances will follow the meal.

If you are a WHS member and unable to attend the Annual Meeting, please pick up an absentee ballot for the WHS Board election at the Holly Center and return it by September 5.

The Depot is located at 525 Oak Street and offers both rails on the front and a wheelchair ramp in the rear for easy accessibility. Parking is available at the top of the hill near the Depot and along both sides of Oak Street.

Mark Your Calendar for Fall Programs

The Waupaca Historical Society has a full slate of fall events open to the public. Be sure to mark your calendars for:

*Sat., August 13, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.: Holly Center Open

*Depot and Hutchinson House Museum Open 2nd and 3rd weekends of August

*Thurs., August 18, 6 p.m. at the Holly Center: "Wisconsin's Post Office Murals" with David W. Gates, Jr.

*Friday, August 19, 5-10 p.m. at Arts on the Square Street Dance downtown: Brat fry fundraiser

*Thurs., September 15, 6 p.m. at the Holly Center:

"Our 351 Sons: The Founding of Rawhide" with John Gillespie

*Sat., September 17, South Park: Hutchinson House Museum Open for Fall-O-Rama

*Thurs., October 13, 6 p.m. at the Depot:

"Waupaca's Granite Quarry" with Mike Kirk

*Thurs., November 10, 6 p.m. at the Holly Center: "How to Be An Indian in the 21st Century" with Louis Clark

*Sat., December 3, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. downtown Waupaca: Waupaca's Yuletide Trail (Commemorative cookie tins will be available for purchase in November)



LOST ARTS FOLK SCHOOL

A PROGRAM OF THE WAUPACA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Fall Classes at the Historic Railroad Depot:



Pumpkin Carving with Jim Miller

Learn how to carve pumpkins with different shadings. This class will be for beginners. All supplies and materials will be provided. Ages 12 and older; ages 12-16 must also have registered adult. \$12 per class.

*** Mon., October 3rd, 1pm to 3pm**

*** Tues., October 4th, 6pm to 8pm**

*** Tues., October 11th, 6pm to 8pm**

*** Wed., October 12th, 1pm to 3pm**



Norwegian Dragon Carving with Mitch Vesaas

Learn to carve a dragon image in softwoods. All supplies and materials will be provided for the class. Ages 18 and older. Contact WHS for costs and registration.

*** Tues., November 1st, 5:30pm to 7:30pm**

To register for classes, visit the Waupaca Historical Society (321 S. Main St.) during open hours (Wednesday-Friday, 10-2), call 715-256-9980, or email director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org. Cash or check only.



At the Depot: Kreunen & Skinner Wagon Restoration Complete

By Mike Kirk, Depot Volunteer

Kreunen & Skinner Wagon

In 2015 I purchased a horse-drawn wagon from Doug Watson for \$600. The wagon had originally been built at the Jens Hansen wagon shop on East Fulton St. in Waupaca. Doug had gotten it a number of years earlier to save it. He had plans to restore it but had not been able to do much with it. Finally Doug decided he needed to get it out of his garage and decided to sell it. Richard Townsend, David Leder and I went to Doug's house to look at the wagon. It needed quite a bit of work. Among other things, the bed was almost entirely rotted away. The wagon still had its original paint job including striping and lettering that read, "Kreunen & Skinner." We realized this piece of Waupaca history needed to be preserved. A price was agreed on, and Richard offered space in his barn to house it.

Lane Streck made the new bed at his shop in Saxeville with my help. Richard did much of the time-consuming work of cleaning off the accumulated dirt, which had hardened onto every surface of the wagon. I worked with Richard on the wagon in the barn. Rotted wood was replaced. Stencils were made to repaint the lettering. We took one of the wheels to an Amish shop near Marion to be rebuilt. The shop had problems getting someone to steam the felloes, and it took well over a year to get it done.

Finally after several years of work, the wagon was finished just in time for this year's 4th of July parade. Gary Otterson agreed to pull the wagon with his 1931 John Deere Model D tractor. The old tractor chugging away with its two-cylinder engine made a great substitute for horses, which would have originally pulled the wagon. Richard and his wife Bertha, Lane and his wife Dorothy, and I rode in the wagon.

Eventually I would like to donate the wagon to WHS if a place can be found or built to store it.



The restored Kreunen & Skinner wagon made its appearance at Waupaca's 4th of July parade this year.

History of the Wagon Shop

Here is some information about the wagon shop, adapted from "When Then Was Now" by Wayne Guyant:

"Jens Hansen, an extensive wagon and carriage manufacturer of Waupaca, was born in Boesholm, near Helsingør, North Sjælland, Denmark, in July of 1838. He was the son of Hans Christian Rasmussen and his wife, Meta Marie Larson Monk. The father, Hans Christian Rasmussen, was a blacksmith with the reputation of making the best wagons and carriages in all of that part of Denmark. Young Jens learned the skills of a blacksmith and wagon maker from his father (His last name was different from his father's due to Danish custom).

"In 1864, Jens enlisted in the services of his native country. He served for 14 months and retired with the rank of corporal. After he returned home he assisted his father in his shop until 1869 when he emigrated to the United States, and Waupaca. Here he found employment with Henry D. Prior, and on November 5, 1869 he bought out Mr. Prior. He paid him \$400 for the west 60 feet of out lot 38, in the village plat.

Continued on page 6

At the Depot: Restored Kruenen & Skinner Wagon

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"In 1870, Jens Hansen returned to Denmark to bring his father back to Waupaca. His father returned with him and worked with his son until his death in 1879.

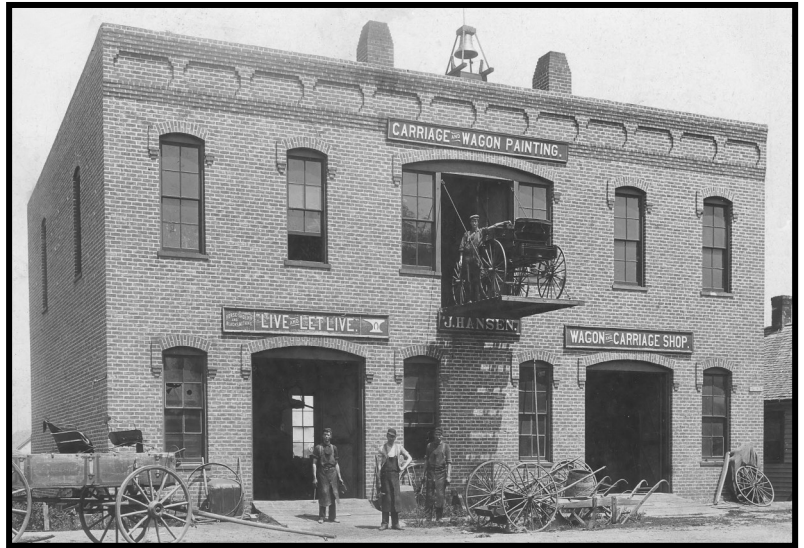
"Jens Hansen's blacksmith and wagon shop was located on East Fulton St. The original shop had his motto, "Live and Let Live," painted in big letters on the front. He employed 12 men, and they manufactured wagons, carriages and sleighs, besides doing general blacksmith work and handling farm machinery of all kinds...

"In 1890, Jens Hansen built a new and much-improved building on the same location. His original shop was of wooden construction, two stories high with three windows on each side of a large display door in the middle of the second story, and one window on each side of the two large, double doors on the ground floor.

"The new building that stands today was of brick construction with a lower, or basement level, and at the same time it has the same basic design right down to the two big double doors to permit a team of horses to enter to be shod, or room for a wagon or carriage to enter to be repaired or painted. There is also the large door in the upper story. Mr. George Frieberg told me that this was used as a display door to show models. Both buildings first had hand-operated freight elevators, but later was mechanized with a large electric motor. The freight elevator was approximately 10 by 10 feet."

"Jens Hansen married Johanna M. Person. She was born in Sweden, March 19, 1851. They were married December 25, 1869, and she died April 6, 1908 here in Waupaca. Jens Hansen passed away January 16, 1902.

"Warranty Deed Volume 117 page 100, dated August 15, 1906, shows that Johanna Hansen sold out to Herman, Thorvold, Albert and Carl C. Nelson on January 13, 1910; Carl C. Nelson sold to Matilde Ekstrom in 1911; Matilde Ekstrom sold to Thorwold and Albert Nelson on April 19, 1920; Thorwold Nelson and his wife Anne Nelson, and Albert Nelson sold to Kreunen and



The Jens Hansen blacksmith and wagon shop (above) was located on E. Fulton Street. The photograph below shows the building today.



Skinner. They were partners until January 26, 1924, when George Skinner and Gaywood A. Skinner, his wife, sold his share to Cornelius Kreunen, who died April 17, 1932.

"From 1920 until 1924 the business went under the name of Kreunen and Skinner, but since that time it has been known as the Kreunen Implement Company. After the death of Mr. Kreunen the property went to Bernice Kreunen, his daughter, and George Frieberg, her husband. They sold John Deere machinery and had John Deere Days held in the Palace Theater [on West Fulton Street where the present-day Farmers State Bank is]. George Frieberg began selling Pontiac cars at this time."

Today, several businesses occupy the Jens Hansen building at 115 and 117 E. Fulton Street, including the Parry Law Office and, on the lower level, T-Dubs.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

(all programs are at the Holly History & Genealogy Center unless otherwise noted)

Thursday, August 18, 6 p.m.: Wisconsin's Post Office Murals with David W. Gates, Jr.

Friday, August 19, 5-10 p.m.: Brat Fry in downtown Waupaca for Arts on the Square street dance

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Thursday, October 13, 6 p.m.: Waupaca's Granite Quarry with Mike Kirk (at the Depot)

Thursday, November 10, 6 p.m.: How to Be An Indian in the 21st Century with Louis Clark

Saturday, December 4: 4th Annual Yuletide Trail (cookie tins available in November)

Staff:

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