

The Reporter

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The Newsletter of the Waupaca Historical Society

Fall 2011

WHS Board of Directors: , Dennis Lear, President; Mike Kirk, Vice President; Betty Stewart, Secretary; Bob Kessler, Treasurer, Dick Bidwell, Tracy Behrendt, Gerald Chappell, Glenda Rhodes, Deb Fenske, David Trombla, Joyce Woldt, Don Witt, Marge Witt, and William Wurzbach.

WHS Director: Julie Hintz

Hutchinson House Curator: Barbara Fay Wiese

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Fox Valley Region Community Foundation is Offering a Charity Challenge

In celebration of its 25th Anniversary, the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region will be gifting a sizeable amount of money to 25 lucky non-profit organizations. The Foundation has selected the Waupaca Historical Society (WHS) as one of 159 area non-profits to participate in their "25 for 25 Charity Challenge". The Foundation has grouped the non-profits into five sub-groups based upon annual budget. WHS is in a group with about 30 other agencies with annual budgets under \$50,000. The Foundation will be offering one endowment gift of \$25,000 and four grants of \$2,500 each, within our sub-group. There are a total of 5 sub-groups and the Foundation will offer a total 25 gifts to 25 non-profits, hence the name "25 for 25 Charity Challenge."

WHS is struggling financially due to recent funding cuts. WE NEED YOUR HELP TO WIN ONE OF THESE GRANTS! Grant winners will be determined based upon online internet voting. Voting will take place daily online from Sunday October 16th through Tuesday October 25th at the website www.cffoxvalley.org. To vote you need to go to that website, click on the "25 for 25 Charity Challenge" symbol, then find and click on "Waupaca Historical Society" on the list of eligible non-profit organizations. You may vote once each day.

The only way we have a chance at winning one of these grants is if we ask our supporters and members to spread the word about this Charity Challenge to friends and family who have computer access (at home or elsewhere). Those who vote do not need to reside in Waupaca, or even in Wisconsin. Please spread the word about this to your friends and family and ask them to pass the above information and voting guidelines to their friends.

Included in this newsletter is a sheet of "25 for 25 Charity Challenge" cards. You may print, copy, or scan this sheet of cards. Please distribute these cards into our neighbors mailboxes, take them to work and place them on coworker's desks, post them at your church, or include them as an "attachment" to any e-mail messages you send to others. It is very important that our membership help us spread the word about this grant opportunity. And don't forget to post one of these cards on your refrigerator or by your phone so you don't forget to vote in mid-October.

If you don't have a computer at home, make copies of the enclosed cards and mail or give them to family and friends who you know have a computer.

The Annual Membership Gathering of the Waupaca Historical Society

With Canadian National Trains periodically roaring by in the background, about 40



President Dick Bidwell updating the WHS membership. Photo courtesy of Bob Kessler.

members of the Waupaca Historical Society gathered at the Waupaca Train Depot on Tuesday evening September 6, 2011, to celebrate the passing of another commendable year in the Society's history. Seated at three tables in the main waiting room, the historians ate well. Dennis and Laurie Lear and Don Writt roasted up Niemuth's Steak and Chop Shop burgers and hotdogs that melted scrumptiously in hungry mouths. Everybody partook in the unmatched pot luck dishes that covered the encircling window shelves and tables of

the women's rest room. Delightful beverages, filling the ticket office, lured thirty historians. As the station buzzed with the chatter of the membership, it was apparent that everyone was eating heartily and having a good time.

Performing as a dynamic team, President Dick Bidwell, Treasurer Bob Kessler, Director Julie Hintz, and depot restorer Mike Kirk, in brief presentations, updated the membership on the state of the society. Mike Kirk demonstrated his musical talent by pounding out several tunes on the depot player piano.



The WHS Board of Directors. Photo courtesy of Jerry Chappell.



Mary and William Wurzbach. Photo courtesy of Jerry Chappell.

Without any need to twist their arms, Glenda Rhodes, Gerald Chappell, and Bob Kessler, current members of the Board of Directors, consented to stay aboard for another three-year term. William Wurzbach agreed to join the Board of Directors, replacing long time member Vera Duesterbeck who has decided not to run for another term.

A good time was had by all.

Highlights of the Chester and Susannah Hutchinson Family

By Jerry Chappell

The following are highlights of "The Hutchinson Family and House Timeline", selected from a genealogical study published in The Waupaca Historical Society's *Reporter* around 2000.

Chester and Susannah Hutchinson gave birth to and raised three sons (Deloss, born Sept 5, 1828; George, March 15, 1833; and Denison, February 15, 1837) in Darien, N. Y.

On March 14, 1850, the oldest son, Deloss, married Sarah Cope. They moved out west to Farmington, Wisconsin, and set up a homestead and farm someplace west of Waupaca. Shortly thereafter, in 1851, Sarah died giving birth to their first son, and within a year (May 30, 1852) Deloss married a second wife, Adaline Smith, and they gave birth to a set of twins. And they had a fourth son in 1855.

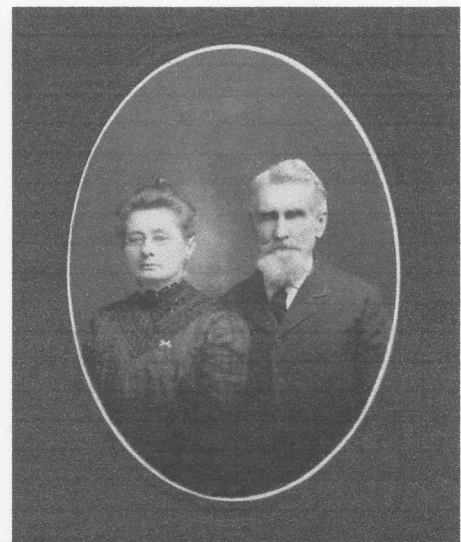
Parents Chester and Susannah Hutchinson, along with sons George and Denison, moved to Waupaca April 2, 1854 and, in the center of the early Waupaca settlement, the three adult sons helped build the Hutchinson house at 303 W. Fulton Street on property purchased for \$140. They bought clapboard from an early sawmill on the Waupaca River and built the first frame home in Waupaca, styling it after Vermont village homes.

A year later, March 25, 1855, George Hutchinson married Susan Severance and they started their own farm in Sheridan, Wisconsin.

As an aside, that summer of 1855, cousins of Chester Hutchinson, Hannah and Mary Parish, visited the Hutchinsons and their sister Abbie and stayed on to open a "Girls Finishing School". In 1856 the cousins were courted by and married George L. Lord and Edward L. Brown in a double wedding ceremony in the Hutchinson House.

In 1857 Deloss Hutchinson was murdered when returning to his Farmington home from his parents' Waupaca home. He had given George Severance a ride in his wagon and an argument ensued. Apparently it was a vicious confrontation in that the assailant hit Deloss repeatedly with a blunt-headed walking stick, killed him, and threw his body in a stream. Interestingly, George Hutchinson's wife Susan Severance died July 27, 1856 from an unknown cause. George Severance escaped from a Portage County jail and remained at large in 1870.

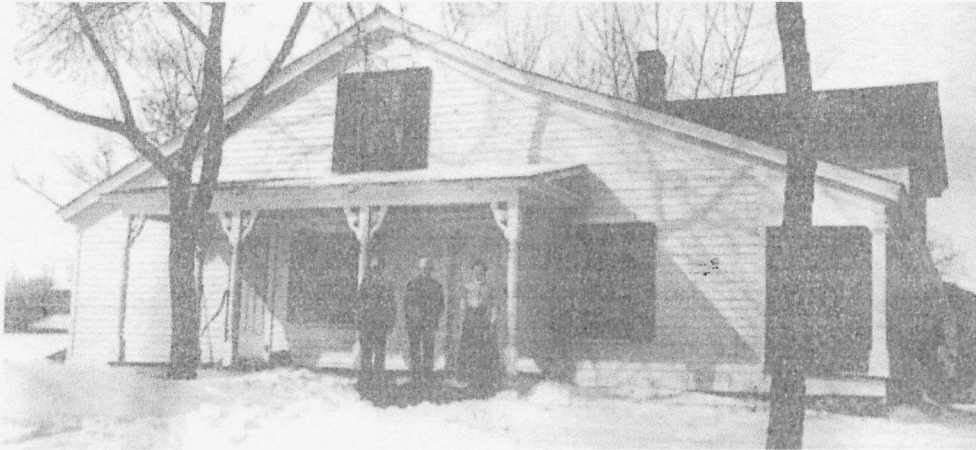
December 5, 1858 George Hutchinson married his second wife, Catherine Clinton, and they gave birth to Julia Hutchinson (Feb 11, 1860) who was followed by a sister, Mary (March 22, 1864).



Julia and George Hutchinson in early 1900s.
Courtesy of the Hutchinson House Museum.

When Chester Hutchinson died January 20, 1867, his son, Denison, was named administrator of the estate. To pay off debts, during the period of 1868 through 1872, Denison sold most of the land (totaling a value of \$1500), but not the house, where he lived with his mother Susannah until her death in 1882. Around that time, he sold the Hutchinson house to Winthorp C. Lord.

Apparently Julia Hutchinson lived from 1860 into adulthood on her father George's Sheridan farm. As a young adult, she left the Waupaca area to teach school for seven years and work in an office in Iowa for three years.



View of the south side of the Hutchinson House in a scrapbook that Julia made for her friend Charlotte Plowman. Julia wrote below the photo "The house of many porches and home of the author." The two men are presumed to be father George on the right and uncle Dennison on the left in the early 1900s. Courtesy of the Hutchinson House Museum.

George's wife Catherine died in 1903, and on February 8, 1905, he purchased the Hutchinson house back from Winthorp C. Lord's widow, Julia, for \$1,800. The next year Julia Hutchinson and her uncle Denison moved into the house, with Dennison taking the small bedroom and informal parlor on the main floor as his private apartment. Julia used the greeting room as her bedroom and rented the upstairs rooms to High School girls for \$1 to \$2 per week. Her high school boarders could not smoke or drink. At that time, the house had no plumbing, just an outhouse and a cistern pump in the kitchen.

George Hutchinson sold the Sheridan farm and moved to Amherst in 1909. He sold the Hutchinson house to his daughter Julie on September 15, 1911, a few months before his death December 4, 1911.

In the 1920s Julia was actively involved in the WCTU prohibition movement. She charged \$2.75 per week rent and the boarders had to furnish their own food. Uncle Denison died November 25, 1927 and his apartment was also rented out.

Suffering financial difficulties during the depression years of the 1930s, Julia had to borrow money from friends. She added plumbing to the house during that period.

Julia sold the house to Mae Suhs in 1942 for \$1 and the right to live therein the rest of her life which was until July 2, 1944. William Taggart bought the house in 1945 and rented it as one large apartment and one small apartment until he died in 1954 right after selling the house to Frederick and Marion Mannel.

The DX Sunray Oil Company attained ownership of the property in 1955 for \$25,000 with plans to tear down the house and build a gas station.

Bent on saving the Hutchinson House from destruction, on April 3, 1956 the three year old Waupaca Historical Society purchased the house for \$1, raised a \$5000 moving fund, and had Nyman Rasmussen move the house in three sections to land in South Park donated by the Waupaca Park Department. On June 30, 1957, The Hutchinson House was officially dedicated , the corner stone laid, and several rooms were opened to the public on the first day of the Waupaca Centennial Celebration.

An additional \$3000 was invested in the museum between 1957 and 1964 to refinish, furnish, and open the remaining rooms on the main floor and plaster, paint, furnish and open the upstairs.

By 1965, the 'Seed 'em and Weed 'em Garden Club', alongside many Waupaca volunteers, had laid the brick walkways, built the picket fences, planted the flower gardens, and filled the rooms with donations of Victorian artifacts.

The Hutchinson House Museum remains open during the summer weekends and holidays, and docents guide visitors through the entire house.



Julia Hutchinson in 1936.
Courtesy of the Hutchinson
House Museum.

Holiday Planning

The Waupaca Historical Society will again participate in the Christmas tree display fundraiser at Hansen's Appliance Store, November 14 through December 24. Here's how it works: stop in at Hansen's anytime between November 14 and December 24. "Vote" for your favorite tree by putting a contribution into the canister for our tree. We will receive the donations from our canister. If our tree collects the most contributions of all the trees on display, we will win the \$100 donation from Hansen's. Cash or checks are accepted. Please make your checks payable to "Waupaca Historical Society". This is a good way for you to make a year- end donation to our Society and help us win the contest at the same time. If you make your donation with a check, you will receive an acknowledgment in the mail in January of 2012. Please stop by Hansen's, enjoy the trees, and vote for the Historical Society tree! Donations of every size are welcome!

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Keeping History Alive and Making History

Reference Correction: In the 2011 Summer issue of *The Reporter* (p.8), the note on the new acquisition of the Godfrey hitching post at the Hutchinson House Museum cited an incorrect listing of the local stonecutter who cut the post as being Sammy Davidson. Ms. Lois Allen of Stevens Point has pointed out that the proper stonecutter was Tommy Davidson. Tommy was a Scotsman who worked for Thomas Swan's monument company in the late 1800's and early 1900's. Interestingly, the post has essentially come back home in that the monument company was located directly across County Trunk K inside the entrance to South Park.