

THE REPORTER

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

Open Wednesday, 12-4, Thursday, 10-2, Friday, 12-4, Saturday, 9-12 (May 28-Sept. 3)

715-256-9980 Web: www.waupacahistoricalociety.org E-mail: director@waupacahistoricalociety.org

VOLUME 20 – NUMBER 3

SUMMER 2016

New Programs, Coloring Club Bring Visitors to the Holly Center

By Jerry Chappell and Tracy Behrendt

The month of May kicked off a full schedule of programming for the Waupaca Historical Society.

Local author Kim Heltemes kicked off the summer schedule with his program on Waupaca in the Civil War on May 26th. Heltemes, author of such local Images of America books as “Waupaca,” “Weyauwega,”

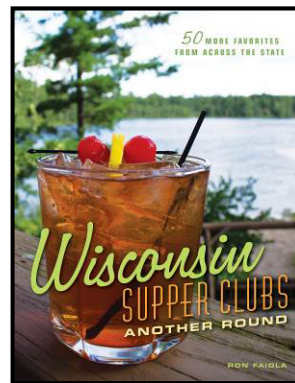


Author Kim Heltemes

“Poy Sippi” and “Wisconsin Veterans Home at King,” shared his knowledge of the military history of Waupaca-area Civil War veterans.

His presentation included war accounts of early Waupaca settlers, their connections to the Wisconsin Veterans Home in King and the evolution of area cemeteries.

Heltemes also explained his role in helping people find the graves of their Civil War ancestors and how he personally has helped replace deteriorated headstones.



Faiola's new book

On June 23rd, filmmaker and author Ron Faiola brought the supper club to the Holly Center for his program, “Wisconsin Supper Clubs: An Old-Fashioned Experience.” Faiola, who recently authored a second book about the state’s supper

clubs, told the history of supper clubs and his travels around the state.

Faiola, a Wisconsin native, also highlighted the many features traditional to Wisconsin supper clubs: the brandy old fashioned drink at the bar, unique relish trays, unlimited salad bars, huge desserts and friendly family ownership and staff with lifelong customers. He also mentioned local supper clubs such as the Pine Tree in New London and the Sky Club in Stevens Point.

Continued on p. 3

Waupaca’s City Hall: 1894 to 1968

by J.J. Johnson

As near as can be understood from various documents, the first city hall building was a wood structure built on the east side of north Main Street in 1854. At some point, that structure was moved to Jefferson Street where it was used by the fire department. Prior to 1854, it appears that a Dr. Thayer conducted his practice and managed a drug store at the

site. While excavating the area in preparation to erect the second city hall building, workmen dug up a tin box containing a female’s leg that had been amputated about three inches above the knee. It appeared to have only been in the ground a few years as the flesh on the leg was still soft and well-preserved in alcohol.

Continued on p. 5

Hutchinson House Open for Season, Looking for Volunteers

Love history? Interested in teaching others and sharing Waupaca's story? The Hutchinson House, located in South Park, is looking for volunteers to serve as summer tour guides. The Hutchinson House is open Saturdays and Sundays from Memorial Day through Labor Day, 1 to 4 p.m.

Volunteer guides provide tours for visitors through the two-floor 1854 historic home. The home, previously located at Fulton and Franklin Streets, opened as a museum in 1957. Today, the Hutchinson House showcases the Victorian era and displays many artifacts from



The Hutchinson House, located in South Park, is looking for volunteer tour guides this summer.

Mike Kirk photo

Waupaca's early settlers, including the Hutchinson family.

Guides present historic information on the Hutchinson House and family, along with notes on the many artifacts. All ages are welcome to volunteer, though students under 18 years old must be accompanied by a parent or guardian when volunteering. No experience is necessary,

and training is provided for new volunteers.

If interested, please contact the Waupaca Historical Society at (715) 256-9980 or email at director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org.

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Bylaw Changes to be Approved at Annual Meeting

The Waupaca Historical Society Board of Directors approved changes to its bylaws at the June 2, 2016 board meeting.

According to Article IX of the Bylaws of the Waupaca Historical Society, "These bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote of members present or voting by proxy at any regular meeting or special meeting called for such purpose, provided the amendment is either submitted in writing to the membership thirty days prior to the meeting or presented for an announced open discussion at the meeting prior to the once set for action on the amendment."

The WHS membership is asked to vote on these changes at the annual meeting, which will take place on Thurs., Sept. 8th at 5 p.m. at the Railroad Depot. Members unable to attend can vote via paper ballot prior to the meeting. Copies of the bylaw changes and ballots are available at the Holly Center.

If you have any questions, please contact the Waupaca Historical Society at (715) 256-9980 or director@waupacahistoricalsociety.org.

Note from the WHS President

By Dennis Lear

I first want to thank our members for their continued support. The Society received several generous contributions during the past year, especially for the Railroad Depot. If you haven't been to the Depot lately, you will be very surprised. New this year, the Depot is open every Saturday from 12 to 3 p.m.

The Hutchinson Historical House at South Park is having a very good year. South Park is more popular than ever, and the number of people going through the house has reflected this increase in traffic. The Hutchinson House is open from 1 to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays all summer and for groups by special appointment.

The Holly History and Genealogy Center is a hub of activity. Our director Tracy Behrendt is available on Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 12 to 4 p.m. to assist you with research and questions regarding Waupaca history. This year, we are also open on Thursdays to assist people with genealogy and history questions, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.. The Waupaca Area Genealogical Society is available for research on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. We have one more program this summer on Thursday, August 25th at 6 p.m. John Gunnell will present "Driving Waupaca: The Automobile Industry in Waupaca."

Lastly, I urge every member to attend the annual membership meeting on Thursday, September 8th at 6:00 P.M. The meeting will be held at the Train Depot, and food and refreshments will be provided. This event will be a good opportunity to see the progress and additions to the Depot

At the Depot

By Mike Kirk

The Depot is now open Saturdays from 12 to 3 p.m. this summer. So far, we have had a good turnout of people anxious to see the Depot and the work we are doing there. Nancy Weasner organizes the volunteer hours. Jeff Weasner and Dave Trombla have generously manned visitor hours.

We now have trains running in the basement on a double-track mainline around the room. The large G-scale trains are quite impressive with the digital sound system really adding to the effect.

We recently received a nice collection of railroad items from the Russell Meartz estate. Meartz was a railroad enthusiast who lived in Neenah. I first learned about him when we found out he had the original Waupaca Depot ticket



For the first time, the historic Railroad Depot is open to visitors on Saturdays this summer from 12 to 3 p.m.

window. Included in the donated items were two railroad artifacts that I have wanted for a long time—a telegraph sounder with a wooden holder on a swivel arm and a candlestick telephone on a scissors arm. Visitors have been interested in two railroad teletype machines that were also donated. The

family also donated his G-scale layout track, which came just as we were running short on track! We also purchased some G-scale rolling stock from the estate.

We also recently added a safe to the Depot office. Depots often had safes, and this one looks the ones that railroad used.

Continued on p. 7

New Programs Take Spotlight (continued from p. 1)

Faiola also signed copies of his two books, each of which describe 50 state supper clubs. His most recent book features Two Lakes Supper Club in Almond, who generously supplied antipasto platters for the event.

The old Waupaca theatres came to life on July 14th as author Kris Leonhardt told the story of the Adler family and their life in the spotlight in Waupaca. J.P. Adler and his family, at one time, owned three theatres in downtown Waupaca — the Palace, Waupaca and Rosa Theatres. The Adler family opened the Rosa Theatre on Main Street in 1948, which still operates today. The Adlers also went on to build one of the largest independently-owned theater chains in Wisconsin.

Waupaca's Rosa Theatre supplied popcorn for the event, and Leonhardt signed her book, "Showstopper: The Adler Family and The Dawn of The Movie Industry," following the



Barbara Fay Wiese Photo
Leonhardt poses with a
painting of J.P. Adler.

program. The book is also available at the Holly Center.

Along with featured monthly programs, the Waupaca

Historical Society has also started the community's first Coloring Club. The club, which meets the third Thursday each month at 6 p.m., draws adults of all ages for

coloring, coffee and great conversation. Each month, the WHS offers a featured coloring page — typically depicting Waupaca history — alongside coffee and cookies.

At the Depot (continued from p. 3)

Larry Behm finished the bottoms of two display cabinets for Dave Johnson and Jim Taylor's railroad china collections. We repurposed former library shelving for the top part of the display cabinets. Whether it is the library shelving, flooring from the armory, light fixtures from a downtown department store, or other things, we have prided ourselves in being able to reuse things from former Waupaca landmarks.

Lane Streck and Larry Behm made the inside moldings for the new exterior doors as well. We added a door to the basement from the men's smoking room, making it much easier to get to the new basement stairway. The original Depot plans showed a door between these two rooms but it was never put in.

We have had the help of Spencer Wagen with the Advanced Traffic Control System computer display. It shows a real time computer screen display of the trains on the railroad. We have had it installed for a few years, but we were sorely in need of someone with the time and computer expertise to make it work properly. Spencer has been a great help in this area. Up until recently, Spencer was a daytime radio DJ on WDUX. He recently took a new radio job in Fond du Lac, but can still maintain our ATCS system from his home.

On this subject, the Depot needs volunteers with railroad interest and computers in the Dale and Amherst area that are willing to become ATCS monitors to complete the system. Contact us if you are interested!

CORRECTION: The article on Loyola Villa in our last newsletter incorrectly attributed this statement to the Loyola Villa: "An article in the *Waupaca Record* on July 7, 1898 told the history of Loyola Villa: 'From a single little building, designed for a restaurant, it has grown to two great hotels and a number of cottages. Last summer 2,000 people were entertained there.'" This quote actually refers to the Grandview Hotel, whose guests sometimes visited the Villa. Thanks, Ron Arthur, for catching it!

Waupaca City Hall (continued from p. 1)

Thoughts of foul play were allayed when it was learned that Brynild Thorson had died during the amputation of her leg by Drs. Thayer and Sheldon. Dr. Thayer had kept the leg to study but eventually it was buried and forgotten.

The land for the second city hall building was purchased earlier from Edwin and Hannah



Waupaca Historical Society photo

Selleck and later the city purchased eight feet of a lot from Winfield Scott for \$770. The two-story brick building (pictured above) was constructed by Conrad Gmeiner for \$7,999.50. The original bid went to Simon Jensen but he miscalculated his bid by \$1,000. When the correction was made, Gmeiner's bid became the low bid so the contract was awarded to him. The bids called for the completion of the building on or before October 15, 1894 by architect F.H. Clark. The structure accommodated the police department, fire department and stables. It also housed the city offices and council chambers. The footing stones, eight inches thick and four feet long, were of Kaukauna River stone. The stones cost 21 cents per square foot and were laid at a cost of \$10 per cord.

When talks had first begun about the construction of a new city hall, there had been a controversy over the location for the building. One side wanted it constructed on Main Street at the end of Session Street (one block south of its eventual location). To ensure the incoming



Waupaca Historical Society photo

city council could not change their minds to build at this Main-Session Streets location, arrangements were hastily made to build a cofferdam, or a watertight enclosure to remove water from a construction area, on the Session Street site. A \$7,000 state loan was secured to commit the city to this proposition. Members went so far as to go to Madison, at the city's expense, to see that the loan was completed rather than risk delays through the postal service.

Despite these attempts, the city council eventually did take into consideration the extra cost for the foundation on the Main-Session site — it was higher from the street level to the footing stones. The building construction would also greatly inconvenience traffic on Main Street for two to three months.

Building the city hall one block north on Main Street had several advantages. The sub-basement could be utilized for storage by putting a nine-foot driveway on the north side of the building. This would leave more usable floor space on the two main floors. This location was closer to the Third Ward, which had more frame houses, planing mills and factories constructed of wood. And, as most homes were heated by burning wood, the north side of Waupaca was at greatest risk for fire. A closer fire station would mean a faster response in the horse-drawn era.

Continued on p. 6

Waupaca City Hall (continued from p. 4)

The building would also be more visible to people coming to Waupaca from the railroad depot. That, along with the construction of the Dane's Home across the street, would give visitors a favorable impression of the community. Considering all these points, the council decided to build on the northernmost Main Street location.

The city hall was completed on November 1, 1894. The only complaint heard was that the fire bell was encased in such a way that, when rung, it could not be heard throughout the city. Instead, it emitted "a dull, sickening thud" that could only be heard near the building. The problem was short-lived as the bell broke on Saturday morning, November 15, 1896. Firemen then proposed to have a blacksmith make wrought iron framework, which would allow the bell to ring sufficiently. In fact, the firemen claimed that the bell on the Live and Let Live wagon shop rang louder than the fire bell. Andrew Hanson, the owner of the shop nearly three blocks away, offered to put the bell on the city hall at no cost to the city so that it would ring loud enough to be widely heard.



Waupaca Historical Society photo

One person in town who always heard the bell was Frank Weisenborn. He lived at the city hall for 37 years. He was hired to train and care for the city's horses, which were purchased to race the fire equipment to the fire, pull the wagon that sprinkled water on the streets to settle the dust, and clear snow from city sidewalks.

In 1896, when Manawa was making its bid to move the county courthouse to its city, the



J.J. Johnson photo

The city hall and firehouse is pictured here shortly before it was demolished.

Waupaca Post stated: "If the people of Manawa really hanker after some of Waupaca's public buildings, and will content themselves with something strictly in keeping with the backwoods appearance of their village, they should come over and get the Waupaca city hall. Few people here would raise a hand to prevent its removal from their offended sight."

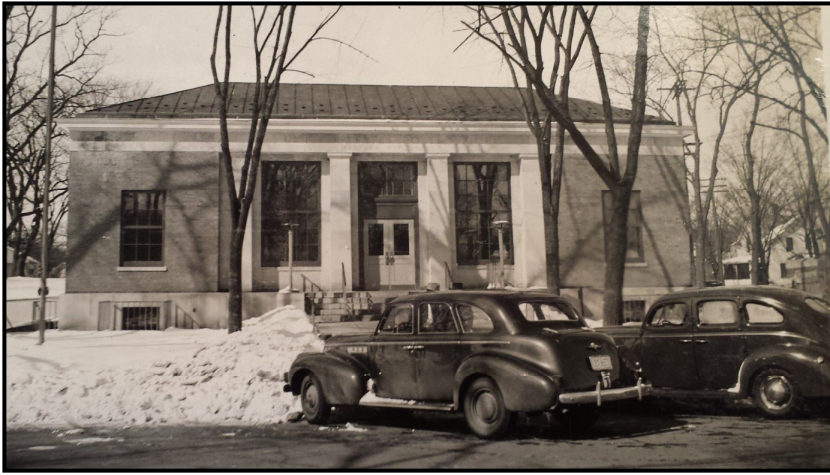
In May 1907, the building was damaged by a fire. Workmen spent two weeks renovating the aging building. Workers installed a steel ceiling in the city clerk's office and calcimined the side walls throughout the structure.

Over the years, the city hall also made rooms available for various meetings and organizations. In fact, when the Waupaca Historical Society was formed, it was given a room at city hall to receive and store donated artifacts. Other groups used the rooms in the city hall, including: the Businessmen's Association, Automobile Association, Cemetery Association, American Legion Post, meetings to organize a city basketball team, CCC Camp, Golf Club, Civil Defense, Building and Loan Association and many others.

In 1969 James and George Anderson purchased the location for \$2,500. They tore the structure down and constructed a 30-unit apartment building for senior citizens at a cost of \$300,000, which still stands today.

Looking Back in the *Waupaca County Post* January 13, 1949

Postmaster Invents Time-Saving Gadget for Busy Postage Patrons



Waupaca Historical Society photo

The new Post Office opened in 1938 and was the first federally owned post office in Waupaca.

Necessity once again has proved to be the mother of invention, and right here in Waupaca.

Postmaster James W. Carew, in his spare hours, has invented a gadget which fills a long-felt need. It should prove profitable to Carew and further spread the fame of Waupaca.

The Carew gadget is called a stamp coil dispenser. It is a receptacle for stamps sold in rolls of 500, a type steadily gaining favor with business people.

Time was when large uses of postage stamps bought them in sheets of 100, but there was unavoidable waste motion in using them. Each stamp had to be torn from the sheet in both horizontal and vertical directions. Stamps in coils or rolls put an end to that annoyance, but there still was the problem of how to keep the roll from uncoiling when not in use.

No Others on Market

Postmaster Carew noticed this and made inquiries as to where stamp coil containers could be purchased, assuming in the beginning that an article for which there was such widespread need would be obtainable at most any stationers.

But no matter where he inquired, no coil stamp dispenser was to be found. Why not devise one, he thought. And that's what he set to work doing.

He began with a block of wood measuring roughly 2-1/2 inches square and 1-3/8 inches deep. In the center of the block he bored a hole 1-3/4 inches in diameter to within a fraction of an inch of the base, to receive the coil of stamps.

Next he fastened a threaded post in the center of the hollow circle to serve as an axle for the stamp coil. For a circular top cover, held fast by a nut similar to those on a dry cell battery, he used aluminum, with two perforations through which the user can see how many stamps remain on the roll. The stamp roll is threaded through a diagonal slit in one side of the container, and one or several stamps may be torn off quickly and easily.

Applies for Patent

Carew already has protected his invention with an application for a patent. He has had a number of the dispensers, which sell for only a dollar, made up and many are in use now in Waupaca business places.

Their acceptance has been more than gratifying, he said today. Everyone having an opportunity to use one is favorably impressed by the way they simplify the handling of large numbers of postage stamps and protect them when not in use.

Carew, now negotiating for production on a large scale, said he hopes the job can be done in this city so employment will be provided local residents. Later, he will arrange for nationwide distribution. The models were made for Carew by Adolph Lewis, this city. The dispensers have a bright lacquer finish and a felt base to prevent marring desk tops.

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Looking Back in the *Waupaca County Post*

August 18, 1904

Our Beautiful Lakes

This is the most beautiful season of the year at the Chain o' Lakes. The woods and fields about the lakes are beginning to take on their rich autumn hues, and leaves and foliage are tinged with yellow and crimson. There is no spot in all the world upon which all the glories of Nature are more lavishly bestowed than the Chain o' Lakes. There is nothing of Nature in her wild and capricious moods, but for the lover of quiet, restful beauty, for the tired toiler who seeks solace close to Nature's heart, the lakes are an absolutely ideal resort.

The name Waupaca is an Indian word, meaning "tomorrow." Legend says—and probably truly—that the Red man applied the name to the lake region because he was so enchanted with their beauties that he kept putting off until the next day his departure for other regions. And that is just what scores of resorters do every year. The lakes are beautiful in early summer, but as the summer advances and the first russet signs of Indian Summer appear, their charm increases and they are at their best.

That the popularity of the Chain o' Lakes is constantly increasing is proven by the new cottages which are being built each season, as much as by the fact that while the attendance at all the summer resorts of the state has been smaller than usual on account of the St. Louis fair, the Chain o' Lakes have been less affected by the counter attraction than the other Wisconsin resorts.

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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.

WAUPACA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

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Donation				
Note: Donations are tax-deductible and will be acknowledged as appropriate.				

Please return the above form with your check or money order payable to
Waupaca Historical Society, 321 S. Main St., Waupaca, WI 54981.

*Waupaca Historical Society
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., Aug. 4th, 5:15 p.m.	Board of Directors Meeting (open to the public)
Thurs., Aug. 18th, 6 p.m.	Coloring Club
Thurs., Aug. 25th, 6 p.m.	Program, "Driving Waupaca: The Automobile Industry in Waupaca" with John Gunnell
Sat., Aug. 20th, 10 a.m.-4 p.m	Art at the Depot WHS Booth at Arts on the Square (corner of Main and Union St.)
Thurs. Sept. 8th, 5:00 p.m.	Annual Meeting and Picnic at the Depot
Tues., Sept. 13th, 6 p.m.	Program, "The Great War: Before, After and Waupaca's Part" with Michael Eckers
Thurs., Sept. 15th, 6 p.m.	Coloring Club