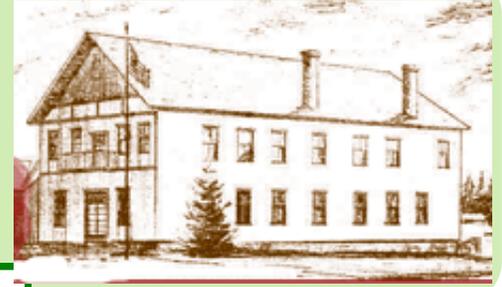


*Preserving our  
Historical Heritage*



# Price County Historical Society Newsletter



[www.pricountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.pricountyhistoricalsociety.org)

Volume 33, No. 2 Sept-Oct 2015

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Newsletter Editor: Lorraine Pilch, Phillips

## Tea Time

A splendid array of delicious finger sandwiches, fruits, deserts, a variety of tea and other beverages awaited guests attending the Victorian Tea, on Sunday, September 27 at the Saint Anthony Padua Center in Park Falls.

Those attending the tea were treated to beautiful table presentations, which included vibrant fall centerpieces, cloth napkins and tablecloths, fine china tea cups and teapots. Tea and coffee was served at each table and guests were invited to take as many trips as they wanted to the main buffet table. The beautifully decorated and abundant buffet table was adorned with fine serving dishes filled with many palate pleasing delicacies. Between trips to the buffet table and pausing to refresh tea cups, games were played for prizes. In addition, drawings were held for many other door prizes including the center pieces.



Enjoying Tea Time



Tea Time and Friends ( Left to Right )  
Brenda Kronberger and Edith Burant

The atmosphere was indeed relaxing and elegant. The tea was designed to transport guests back to a time during the Victorian Era when afternoon teas were a time to socialize with friends and partake of light refreshments. Afternoon teas were also a way to curb the hunger pangs between a very early breakfast and a supper that was fashionably served between eight or nine o'clock in the evening. The tea was sponsored by the Price County Historical Society with assistance from the Flambeau Red Hat Jewels. The tea was a resounding success and all money raised at the event went to help support building and grounds projects at the Old Town Hall Museum in Fifield.

**The Price County Historical Society** set up a display during the Price County Fair in August at the Fairgrounds in Phillips. The display contained artifacts that survived the Phillips Fire along with a very brief synopsis of the fire and its aftermath. The artifacts on display were a chair that had been buried in the ground to save it from the fire along with two quilts, which had been used to wrap family silverware as people fled the fire with literally the clothes on their backs.

The following synopsis was gleaned from the book *Phillips Fire Centennial 1894 – 1994* and the *Phillips Bee*.

“The very air seemed to explode and burn. No power on earth could have stopped it. It was a terrible night for those who were cut off and surrounded at different points by the fire. Many were obliged to keep their heads covered all night with wet clothing and to throw water over each other to keep alive. It was a terrible night never to be forgotten by those who passed through it.” *The Phillips Bee August 1, 1894.*

### THE FIRE

JULY 25, 1894 forest fire begins in the S.E. corner of Sec. 4 of the township of Harmony, formerly Georgetown in the Lake Ten area. According to the Phillips Times Phoenix Edition, the fire began when a pile of dry hemlock bark was set on fire by a drunken man after the wife of the man refused to sign a mortgage on their property. The man left the area and was never seen since.

Despite efforts to contain the fire, the fire spread into the forest and big swamp southwest of the city of Phillips. The wind suddenly shifted from the west to the south heading toward Phillips.

JULY 27, 1894 between 2:00 and 3:00 p.m. a gale of wind brought the fire into Phillips with terrific force. Preparation for the fire had been going on for two days. Despite valiant efforts by the Phillips Fire Department and individuals, the wave of fire shooting 200 feet into the air jumped from block to block consuming homes, businesses, churches, and public buildings. The final fourth wave of the fire took all of the remaining part of the city except for some buildings on the extreme south end of the city.

Dispatches for assistance were sent by telegraph to neighboring towns and the residents of Phillips fled for their lives.

- **The John R. Davis Lumber Company** made up a train of 15 boxcars and loaded 800 people in and on top of the boxcars and the train left for Prentice. Engineer J.J. Bean stated “It was the longest twelve miles to Prentice I ever heard of. The smoke was so dense; we had to feel our way, not knowing, when we might run on to a burned culvert or bridge.”

- The residents of Beebe and Tannery Towns were forced to seek safety across the Elk River.
- Four hundred people took refuge on Eaton’s Hill south of the city.
- Two hundred and fifty people took refuge at the Price County Fairgrounds.
- Thirteen lives were lost when several families escaping the fire on a large boat house that was built on a log float got caught in the suction created by piles of burning lumber. Flames shooting 1,000 feet into the air turned the lumber yard into a whirling inferno, which began to draw the log float back into the flames. The families then took to boats, but the suction of the fire created waves on the lake from six to eight feet high and the boats were swamped. All but one person drowned.

(Continued on page 3)

## LOSS, RELIEF AND REBUILDING

- Phillips lost thirteen lives including eight children the afternoon and evening of July 27, 1894, virtually the whole town, all the public buildings, businesses, churches and two major economic drivers, the John R. Davis Lumber Company and the Fayette Shaw Tannery. Infrastructure and bridges were also destroyed. Out of 700 houses, manufacturing plants and business only thirty nine houses in the southern part of the city remained.
- Fifield was the first to respond in the morning by bringing in food and supplies through fire and smoke by handcar. Medford responded by the afternoon and Stevens Point by the next night, followed by Marshfield, Ashland, Milwaukee and Rhinelander. Supplies and money continued to flow into Phillips from all over the state and nation.
- Prentice provided comfort, food and lodging for those fleeing and losing their homes in the fire. At one point just after the fire, Prentice was feeding and caring for several thousand people from Phillips.
- Shortly after the fire an epidemic of typhoid and other illnesses spread throughout the area with Drs. Sperry and Fenelon averaging 60 to 70 calls a day over a 30 day period. They did not charge for their services.
- Monetarily the loss was in the millions of dollars.
- A relief committee was formed and the relief headquarters were set up.
- Even before the fire had quit burning in the ruins of the city the decision had been made to rebuild.
- Temporary tents, shanties and other places were built.
- Adjustments began with insurance companies and several merchants announced they would rebuild with brick (many of those buildings remain).
- Mr. Fayette Shaw, at the age of 70, began efforts to rebuild his tannery.
- The John R. Davis Lumber Company announced intentions to rebuild.
- Though the courthouse burned, the vaults and safes in the building passed through the fire safely and the courthouse and jail were rebuilt.
- Countless residents decided to stay and rebuild their homes.
- A year later, July 27, 1895, the City of Phillips, the “Queen Island City” held a celebration.

**Editors Note:** In doing research for the display the book *Phillips Fire Centennial 1894 – 1994* was extensively consulted for historical information to complete the display. To gain an appreciation of the scope and magnitude of the fire, survival of the people and sheer will it took to rebuild the City of Phillips I highly recommend this book as a must read. The book is dedicated to “Past, present and future citizens of the City of Phillips and especially to those pioneer citizens who had the courage, faith and fortitude to rebuild the city.” As you read the book you will find stories of Phillips before the fire, how the fire originated and many stories of survival. You will also become aware of the fact that many of the same buildings built directly after the fire, both business and residential still stand today. Ironically, in 2015 this display was set up at the Price County Fairgrounds, which in 1894 was one of the places that residents of the City of Phillips used to seek shelter from the fire. Copies of the book are available for sale through the Price County Historical Society and the Price County Telephone Company. The artifacts are on display at the Old Town Hall Museum in Fifield. The Price County Historical Society would also like to thank and acknowledge Cathy Mess and Bill Ball for their assistance in helping us to create this display.

# Active Membership As of 10-25-2015

<b>LIFE MEMBERS</b>
BANT, JAMES/JOYCE
BAUMGARTNER, KAREN
BERANEK, MR/MRS JOE
BERG, JOHN L
BERG, MICHAEL/PAMELA
BIRCHMEYER, PAMELA
BLOOM, BARBARA
BRASKI, MARCELLA
BRAYTON, BEVERLY
BRAZELTON, GLENN
BRENDEL, CHARLOTTE
BROWN, NORENE
BURANT, EDITH
CHAFER, HADLEY/NANCY
CORDY-PRITZL, DOROTHY
CVENGROS, CLARENCE
CZECH/SLOVAK FEST
DAHLIE, DR. JAMES G
DAHLIE, DR. PETER N
DANIELSON, DONNA
FAILING, GARY
FLAMBEAU, TOWN OF
FLEMING, IRENE
FLEMING, ROGER/GRACE
FOJTIK, MARIE
FOYTEK, ETOLA
FRANKULIN, KATHY
FROMM, MARLEE
GENISIO, JOEL/NANCY
GIBEAUT, ED/JO
GOC, MICHAEL
GRUBE, DUANE R
HABECK, VIOLET/SUSIE
HOFFMAN II, HAROLD G
HOFFMAN, WILLIAM
HOWLETT-STONE, DON/LISA
HRAD, EDITH
ILLICH, JANE
JONETT, RITA D
KENNY, MARION
KNUTSON, DAVID
KOENIG, CAROL
KOENIG, STEPHEN
KOWALSKI, ANDY/ROSEMARY
LANDRE, DEBRA
LIVIERI, TIMOTHY
LOVETT, RICHARD N
MARSCHKE, CARL/GAY
MARSHALL, BRUCE/SUSAN

<b>LIFE MEMBERS</b>
MEIER, DAWN
MEIER, LAVONNE
MEIER, MICHAEL/TONI
MOCKLER, DON
MORRISON, ARLENE
NALEID, THOMAS J.
NEECK, LILLIAN
NEUHAUSER, DR. KENNETH
NEWTON, MARCUS
NUSSBERGER, MARION
OCKER, GARY/JANICE
OLSON, RUTH
OSTLING, MARY
PIKETTES
PILCH, RICHARD/LORRAINE
PLANT, ROSEMARY
SCHROEDER -DAILEY/JANE
SCHUMANN, RUTH N
SELUCKY, BARBARA
SETTERMAN, ANNETTE
STANKE-STROM, MARY LOU
STEBEN, MARILYN
STROMBOM, FRED/INEZ
STUTZ, JONI
STUVE, TERRY/SHERI
TROJAK, MAUREEN
TROJAK, THERESE
UPSON, ARNOLD/THERESA
VINCENT, ALICE
WELCH, PAM
WELLS FARGO PARK FALLS
WELLS FARGO- PHILLIPS
ZELLINGER, CAROLE
ZORN, LOUISE
<b>INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS</b>
ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY
ALM, LESLIE
BARKSTROM, ALAN/DIANE
BEHREANDT, VERNA
BODENBURG, JEAN
BOECK, ROGER/BARBARA
BOETTCHER, DAVE/CAROL
BOSSE, GINNY
BOUCHONVILLE, ADRIENNE
BRADLE, CLARENCE
BUBENIC, DONNA
DUMONTE, GAYE L.
EGGLESTON, RICHARD
FAMILY SEARCH INTL
FORWARD, CAROL
FRANKE, KATHI
GARGES, PATRICIA

<b>INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS</b>
GEHRMAN, JOANN
GERBER, LETA
HEIKKINEN, DALE
HEIZLER, SUSAN
HILGART, FRANCIS
HINTZ, AL
HOFFMAN, MARK/LENORE
HOOPER, CHERYL
JESSE, GENE/DONNA
KAISER, TERRI
KENYON, KEN/JOLENE
KIELSMEIER, ARLYN/GRACE
KIRCHMEYER, RUSS/JEANNE
KLEINSMITH, BARB/MARGE
KOSHAK, JEFF/SUSAN
KUNDINGER, LINDA
LAPOINTE, ROBERT/KATHY
LEMIEUX, HEDY
LEVINE, DENNIS
LIEBELT, ANN
MASUCA, TAMI
MICHALSKI, BETTI
MOVRIK, JERRY/GAIL
NELSON, ROBERT
NOLAN, RUBY
PETERS, JUNE
PIEPER, ROBERT/ELLEN
POMMIER, JOSEPH/YVETTE
ROGERS, CECELIA/ROBERT
SALM, BONITA
SEDIVY, ELMER
SHEPHERD, JIM
SHILTZ, NATALIE
SMART, JERRY/KAYE
TAUSCHMAN, TERRY
TEETERS, ETHEL
TEETERS, TERRY
TOLLERS, VINCE
WEST, MARY JO
WIRSING, JACCI

<b>BRONZE MEMBERS</b>
BARTELT, PETER/CONNIE
BOETTCHER, JOHN/CARLA
BEHREANDT, GINGER
BRILLHART, GERALD
BUSBY, EDWARD
BUTTS, ELLEN
CERVENKA, KATHRYN
CLEVEN, KATHLEEN
FERANEC, MARY
FIVE SENSES, LLC THE
HICKS, CONNIE
HINTZ, JIM/DEE
KENNAN LUMBER CO. LLC
KOSHAK, ALAN
KRONBERGER, JIM/BRENDA
LUDWIG, RICHARD/JOAN
MOQUIN, DOUG/BONNIE
PATENAUDE, DAN/JEANNE
PRITZL, PATTI
ROSS, DICK/LUCY
SALES, DEBORAH/MYRON
SCHRADER, ED/ARLENE
SOHN, ROBERT/ELIZABETH
SOHN-MACDONALD, REBECCA
STRAND, ROGER/JANE
THELEN, JERRY/KAY
WAGNER, FRANK/BETTY
WOLLNER, LARRY/CAROL
WUDEL, AGNES
ZIRBEL, RONALD
<b>SILVER MEMBERS</b>
1ST NTL BANK-PARK FALLS
FRIENDS OF FRED SMITH
HILGART REALTY, INC.
HYNEK, ROBERT
OLSON, TOM/LINNEA
SIMON, DICK
<b>GOLD MEMBERS</b>
MILLER, DIANE

**MEMBERSHIP MATTERS**  
**PRICE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY**  
**MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL AND NEW MEMBER FORM**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

NEW \_\_\_\_\_ RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES: PLEASE CHECK YOUR SELECTION:**

INDIVIDUAL MEMBER.....\$10.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
BRONZE MEMBER.....\$25.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
SILVER MEMBER.....\$50.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
GOLD MEMBER.....\$100.00 \_\_\_\_\_  
LIFE MEMBER.....\$500.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Please write check to **PRICE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY** (designate **MEMBERSHIP YEAR** on check and on this form.) I am paying for the year of \_\_\_\_\_. A membership term runs from January 1 through December 31.

Mail it with this form to: Price County Historical Society, Membership  
P. O. Box 156  
Fifield, WI 54524

- Check box if you want newsletter sent to the address on the membership form.
- Check box if you do not want the newsletter.
- Check box if we may send you your newsletter by e-mail to help save paper and postage.
- Check box if you would like to volunteer. We will contact you.
- Check box, if you would like an e-mail reminder of special events.

All membership money automatically goes into our regular fund for general upkeep of our three buildings, utilities, insurance, and printing and sending our newsletters.

Your yearly membership entitles you to three newsletters and a voice at the annual meeting.

Donations in addition to membership are always urgently needed and greatly appreciated.

**THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR PROMPT PAYMENT. YOU ARE HELPING TO PRESERVE TODAY'S HISTORY FOR TOMORROW.**

# The Lake Shore and Eastern

## *A Logging Railroad in North-Central Wisconsin*



LS&ERR Number 258 arrives in Phillips from Township of Emery, ca. 1907. Louise Foster Zorn

Researched and Written by

John L. Berg

A century past, lumber companies used steam-powered equipment to harvest vast forests that covered northern Wisconsin. Upon the demise of these companies, the once common sight of the logging railroad faded rapidly and little was remembered about these landscape changing operations among which the Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad at the headwaters of the Chippewa River was one of the most extensive and long-lived.

John L. Berg has compiled a thoroughly researched and well paced narrative complete with stunning photographs and concise maps. *The Lake Shore and Eastern, A Logging Railroad in North-Central Wisconsin* will be an easily accessible and amply illustrated resource for students of the steam era short lines and for the general reader of Wisconsin history. Those engaged in land use policy will find thorough documentation of the era. Over 200 photographs and accompanying maps cover the entire span of operation of the Price County logging railroad. This book, when published, will cement an era of history that was vital to the development of Price County and Northern Wisconsin.

The publishing of this book is historical preservation through publication and is being done as a public service project. John will not receive any monetary compensation or income from the sale of the book and is donating the profits to the Price County Historical Society as a public service to help bolster the society's efforts at historic preservation and educational outreach.

The Price County Historical Society is conducting a fundraising campaign along with writing several grants to try to ensure that this book comes to fruition and that this important era of history is preserved.

If you wish to donate toward the publication of this book please fill out the following information and send to the address indicated. The Price County Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization.

I would like to donate toward the publishing of *The Lakeshore and Eastern: A Logging Railroad in North-Central Wisconsin*.

Amount of Donation \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to Price County Historical Society and note on the memo line LSAERR

Send to: Price County Historical Society

Old Town Hall Museum

W7213 Pine Street

P.O. Box 156

Fifield, WI 54524-0156

## MEMORIAL BOARD

The Memorial Board is displayed in the entrance of the Old Town Hall Museum. For a minimum donation of \$25.00 a name plate can be purchased that will be engraved with the name of your loved one. This is a wonderful way to honor and memorialize family members or friends. If this is something you wish to consider doing, please contact the Price County Historical Society and we will help you with the arrangements.

## UPDATE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Annual Meeting of the membership was held on October 25, 2015. The meeting was well attended with approximately fifty five members and guests present. The highlight of the meeting was the presentation done by John Berg on *The Lake Shore and Eastern, A Logging Railroad in North-Central Wisconsin*. Please see a description of John's project in the special insert in this newsletter.

Membership renewal is now due for 2016. If you are not a life member and have not yet renewed your membership please fill out the form "Membership Matters." contained within this newsletter and send the completed form along with your membership fee to the address listed on the form.

Volunteers are needed for 2016 to help host at both the Old Town Hall and Greenfield School Museums. If you are willing to take a turn hosting this summer, please indicate that on your membership form and someone from the society will contact you to make those arrangements. The museums are opened every Saturday and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. from the first full weekend in June through Labor Day weekend.

Due to personal reasons Bev Brayton, Jeff Koshak and Leslie Alm have resigned from the Board of Directors. The current 2016 Board of Directors are: Etola Foytek, Peter Dahlie, Annette Setterman, Jo Gibeaut, Edith Burant, Arlene Morrison, Lorraine (Laurie) Pilch, Deborah Sales, Bonnie Salm and John Berg.

Officers for 2016 are: Etola Foytek, President, Peter Dahlie, Vice-President, Annette Setterman, Secretary and Jo Gibeaut, Treasurer.

Events planned for 2016 include a Spaghetti Dinner Fundraiser at the Fifield Town Hall on April 19. A Stitching Demonstration and Pie Social at the Museums in June. A Strawberry Shortcake Fundraiser at the Museums in July (date to be determined when the strawberries ripen!) An event (yet to be determined) in August. More information on these events to come as they occur.

PRICE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY - TREASURER'S REPORT  
SEPTEMBER 30, 2015

		Period Ended <u>9/30/2015</u>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Grants		675.00
Membership Dues		1,320.00
Donations		13,463.00
Visitor Donations		489.61
Books Sold		449.17
Interest Income		23.69
Gift Shop Sales		90.75
Fundraisers		2,656.55
Memorials		50.00
Miscellaneous		140.00
<b>INCOME TOTAL</b>		<u>19,336.17</u>
<b>EXPENSE</b>		
Advertising		0.00
Insurance		0.00
Fees/Dues/Licenses		364.00
Gift Shop Purchases		0.00
Office Rent		1,000.00
Office Expense		190.66
Postage Expense		6.31
Website Expense		0.00
Newsletter Printing		0.00
Repairs/Maint-OTH		1,851.93
Repairs/Maint-School		446.62
Repairs/Maint-Office		0.00
Preservation Materials		0.00
Supplies - OTH Museum		90.45
Utilities - OTH		485.53
Utilities - School		673.80
Utilities - Office		295.13
Publishing		100.00
Fundraiser Expense		160.00
Miscellaneous		0.00
<b>EXPENSE TOTAL</b>		<u>5,694.75</u>
Checking Account		27,335.72
Savings Account		3,096.53
<b>CASH ON HAND</b>		<u>30,432.25</u>

Designated Donations:*		
Maybelle Hardy	125.00	Maybelle Hardy - Update display & preservation
Fifield School Monument	474.58	Monument maintenance - plants \$25.42
OTH Museum Entrance Update	88.02	\$37.98 spent to-date
Grant (2013) for Photo Project	494.40	Grant for \$1,000 - \$805.56 spent to-date
Buildings & Grounds	13,488.52	OTH Painting - Priority
Mini-Grant for Inventory software	700.00	PassPerfect Software - Pending October
Weathershield grant for preservation	160.00	Desiccants - Pending October
Photo Preservation donations	287.80	Johnson Photos - \$432.70 spent to-date
<b>Total Designated Funds</b>	<b>\$15,757.82</b>	

\*Designated Fund Donations maintained in PCHS account at First National Bank, Park Falls. These funds are included in totals of cash on hand.



A mural "Fleeing the Fire" inspired by the 1894 Phillips Fire and donated to PCHS by David Winkler, grandson of Fredrick Arthur Winkler, is presently on loan to the City of Phillips and is on display in the Council Chambers at the Phillips Municipal Building.

Price County Historical Society  
Old Town Hall Museum  
W7213 Pine Street, P.O. Box 156  
Fifield, Wisconsin 54524-0156