

*Preserving our
Historical Heritage*



Price County Historical Society Newsletter



www.pricecountyhistoricalsociety.org

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The Museum Season is Here! Come on in and enjoy the displays!

As one drives through Fifield on Highway 13, the imposing edifice of the Old Town Hall Museum and the Greenfield School commands the attention of passer-bys. Since 1894 the Town Hall has been a defining structure in this village; since the early 1970s it has been the home to artifacts from throughout Price County, serving as a museum open to public viewing. In the 1990s, the efforts of several members and citizens resulted in the addition of the Greenfield School to the museum campus. The addition of the monument commemorating the second Fifield High School, along with the Vietnam Veterans Commemorative Trail marker has completed the displays.

Recent renovations of the Old Town Hall Museum and Greenfield School have restored the beauty of these historic structures. The Town Hall Building and the Greenfield School were scraped and painted last year, restoring their former glory. More work is forth coming as the basement of the Town Hall will be sealed



Museums open June 3rd and 4th
No admission charge

to reduce the moisture content from its dirt floor. Funds are being solicited to repaint the interior ceiling and upper walls of the lower hallway, stairwell, and upper floor.

The Board and members of the Price County Historical Society invite any and all interested in learning more about Price County to spend time at these museums this summer! Come on out and see what's here!

**Interested in owning a piece of Price County history?
Have we got a deal for you!**

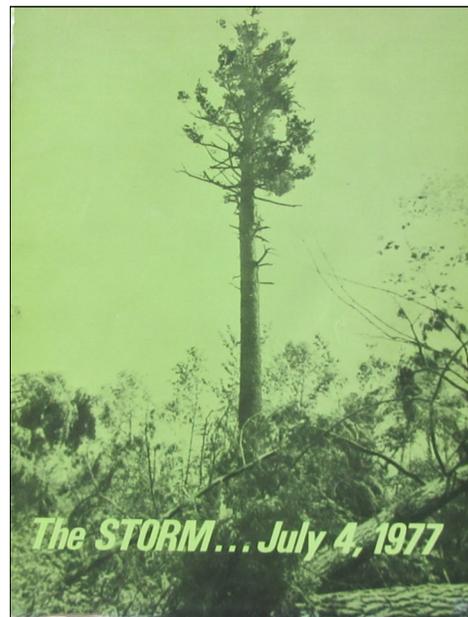
The Bi-Centennial of the United States, celebrated in 1976, spurred the interest and resolve of many local historical societies through out Wisconsin to compile and publish centennial histories of their communities and counties. Our own Price County was in the vanguard of this movement, with publication of *Fifield, 1876-1976*, (by Elva Lessard) and *Phillips, Wisconsin, 1876-1976* (by Gladys Pippenger and Leona Schmidt). These were followed by *The Storm...July 4, 1977*, published to document the disastrous Downburst of July 4, 1977 that destroyed so much of central Price County. In 1978, the *Prentice Centennial Album, 1878-1978* (by Selma Hagg, Betty Carl Anderson, and Signe Nelson) documented much of the southern Price County history. *100 Years On The Flambeau*, (Michael J. Goc and the Centennial Committee) published in 1989, told the story of Price County's northernmost city. Since that

time, several books have been published covering diverse aspects of Price County history, Most were printed and bound right here in Price County by F.A. Weber and Sons, of Park Falls. Weber & Sons is no longer in business, but the legacy of their craftsmanship lives on in the sturdy volumes they printed, most of which are sold out. Most recently, *The Lake Shore And Eastern, A Logging Railroad In North-Central Wisconsin* (John L. Berg, 2016) was published. It documents the operations of the Lake Shore And Eastern in Price and Ashland County.

This book, along with quality reprints of the earlier volumes are available for sale at the Old Town Hall Museum gift shop. *The proceeds of sales of each of the books goes directly to the finances of the Society to support operating expenses.* The individual purchasing these books receives two great values at one price; the enjoyment of owning a part of county history and the satisfaction of supporting the Price County Historical society! Such a deal! Come on in and browse through the gift shop—there are many topics to choose from!

July 4, 2017 makes the 40 year anniversary of the "Downburst." The storm that hit that Independence Day contained intensely damaging sustained winds that cut a swath of destruction 166 miles long and 17 miles wide through northern Wisconsin. With the backdrop of stifling humidity and an eerie colored green sky it wrought destruction on the community of Phillips that many in their lifetime had never witnessed before.

To commemorate the event and the resilience of its people, the Society is planning a special display at the Old Town Hall Museum throughout the summer. In addition, the book "The Storm" has been re-printed once again and will be available for purchase at the museum gift shop.



Speaking of books...

For those who wish to expand their library of pertinent local history books, here are three volumes referencing Price County history.

Fresh off the press in early 2017, is *Wisconsin's Lost Towns*, by Rhonda Fochs. This book is the latest in a series Rhonda has published, documenting the historical data and anecdotal recollections from the residents of these now forgotten places. *Wisconsin's Lost Towns*, "Featuring over 200 lost, long ago and nearly gone places throughout the state of Wisconsin, the book is also filled with then and now photos." The Price County hamlets of Knox Mills and Lugerville, as well as several in neighboring counties are featured in Rhonda's extensive work. Those interested in purchasing a copy (\$21.95 per copy) can contact Rhonda at Rhonda Fochs, Box 63, Motley, Minnesota, 56466, or online at www.rhondafochs.weebly.com. Currently retired, Rhonda had a varied career, having worked for Tonka Toys as an assembler, working in an LP record distribution warehouse, serving in government roles, managing a construction office, and at age 42, becoming a social studies teacher. Rhonda's passion for history, in particular local and regional history, grew from her and her family's travels throughout her home state of Wisconsin. Finally she has realized her dream and compiled her research into *Wisconsin's Lost Towns*.

Wisconsin's Flying Trees In World War II, published in 2014 by Sara Witter Connor. Sara had a book signing at the Old Town Hall in June of 2014. Sara has written a definitive account of her family's efforts to supply the United States and British air forces with the wood products essential to the construction of flying craft to fight the Nazi war machine. Sara has long been interested in the Roddis and Connor history, logging and railroad operations in Northern Wisconsin, and

its counties and towns. She was a past President of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin, and The Camp 5 Museum and Railroad at Laona, Wisconsin. She is currently working on a history of the Turtle Flambeau Flowage. Copies of her book are available online at Amazon.com., Arcadia Publishing, Barnes & Noble.com., or Books-A-Million.com. Prices range between \$20 - \$20.99 per book.

The Heart of Hell by Mitch Weiss is a nonfiction book published by Random House. Clifford Lemke, a Park Falls native, World War II veteran and Iwo Jima survivor served aboard Landing Craft Infantry 449. Seven of these LCIs and their crews were sent in advance of the battle of Iwo Jima to scout out the landing area and remove mines or anything else that could interfere with the invasion. As they approached the coastline they took fire from the Japanese, which resulted in 22 of the 70 servicemen aboard being killed, 21 injured, all gun crews wiped out and only one officer standing. Clifford Lemke came back from WWII a changed man and eventually committed suicide in 1999. Dennis Blocker II, grandson of Clifford Lemke, after a request from his mother, who suspected something terrible had happened to her father during the war; asked her son to "find out what happened to your grandpa during the war." After extensive research, Dennis uncovered the story of his grandfather and the untold story of the crew of the Landing Craft Infantry 449. Published in March of 2016, Dennis did a presentation and book signing at the Greenfield School in August of 2016. The book is available through several outlets including Amazon.

Books such as Rhonda Foch's *Wisconsin's Lost Towns*, Sara Connor's *Wisconsin's Flying Trees In World War II* and researcher Dennis Blocker's *Heart of Hell* provide important insight into Price County's role in Wisconsin's story and our national history.

Preserving Price County History

The preservation of history constitutes many aspects: preserving structures, specific artifacts such as tools, clothing, furniture, glassware and dishes, books, and documents, photographs, newspapers, and just about any other item that helps tell the story of our county.

As Laurie Pilch so thoroughly documented in the September-December 2016 issue, the Society is involved in archiving all the photographs in its collection. One important part of this process is assigning an accession number and recording a description of the photograph's image. Many of these photographs lack a description of the location, date, event, and people in the image. If one photograph from an era happens to have either the date, location, event, or a person's name written on the back, it serves as a starting point for identifying other photographs from the same time or locale. Cross referencing photographs using these details has led to identifying photographs lacking information. This is the fascinating puzzle of historical research. The excitement when positive identification of people, places, events and dates can be confirmed is deeply satisfying! And, it helps solve the mystery of the history of the county and puts it in its proper context.

And, When You're at the Museum... YOU can help research and record history!

We need the assistance of visitors, members, and patrons in our quest to identify details in photographs in the Society's collection. As the Photograph Project Committee completes the processing of each photograph, a photocopy is made and placed in a 3-ring binder for reference. The committee plans to have these on display at the museum. Here's where you play an essential role – can you positively identify any people, locations, dates, and any other details in the photograph? A notebook and pencil will also be provided so viewers can help record their information and the committee can incorporate that into the catalogue. Not all pictures will be from the 1800's or early 1900's. We have Photographs from every decade that need identification the picture below is from the Park Falls Herald Collection. Can you help us identify it?



Front Row: Unknown

Middle Row: Carol Dahlie, Price County Nurse

Back Row: Left to Right

Arnie Tucker? Unknown, Dr. Kirby Redman, Unknown. Also do you know the location? The reason the picture was taken? It looks like some Lion Club members. Possibly some type of eye care project? Send any information you have to PCHS P.O. Box 156 Fifield, WI 54524-0156

Preservation of History Isn't Just About Artifacts

Those who visit the Price County Historical Society website will read this statement:

“Discovering, preserving and passing on the history of Price County. The Price County Historical Society is a repository for documents, photographs, and artifacts which we share through exhibits, libraries, Archives, resources for local school districts, and historical and genealogical researchers.” To fulfill this mission, it takes significant effort of everyone interested in the history of our county. Here's a list of the committees of the Society:



PCHS Pres Etola Foytek and Jerry Movrich

Membership, Newsletter, Office Management, Photography Project, Museum Hosts, Publicity, Budget, Museum Exhibits, Events, Fund Raising, Facilities and Grounds Maintenance, Collections Management, Community Outreach, Web Master, By-Laws and Policy, and Grants.

Fortunately, the general membership and Board of your Society, as well as interested citizens, have a wide diversity of interests, ideas, and skills that are necessary in the preservation of history. Some members are interested in the maintenance of the buildings, and others in the organization of displays within the museum. Others prefer to focus on the organization of social events to help raise funds for operating expenses. Regardless of their level of expertise, everyone is encouraged and welcomed to become involved.



PCHS VP Peter Dahlie welcoming guests

Our first fundraiser of the season was the Spaghetti Dinner, held this year on March 28 at the Fifield Town Hall in Fifield. The event had one of the largest turnouts ever, with 103 meals sold. A festive afternoon on a beautifully warm and sunny day made the event a resounding success. After expenses, the proceeds from the dinner, its accompanying bake sale, and book sale all go to the operation of the Price County Historical Society. Specifically the proceeds from the dinner and bake sale will go for the interior painting project at the Old Town Hall Museum. The Society is very fortunate to have members and friends who actively support these efforts through their work at this event. A BIG THANK YOU to all who did all the site preparation and clean up, cooking, bake sale items, and promotion! Your efforts are GREATLY APPRECIATED!

A full house for the Spaghetti Dinner!



Did you know that Park Falls once was the Shay Patent steam railroad locomotives capital of Wisconsin?

John L. Berg has dubbed Park Falls as Wisconsin's Shay Locomotive Capital. A total of seven Shays were in operation at various times from 1894 to 1940. The Flambeau Paper Company, the Park Falls Lumber Company, Roddis Lumber and Veneer Company, Atwood Manufacturing Company, and the Edward Hines Hemlock and Hardwood Company all operated Shay Patent Locomotives. Berg is researching the Park Falls Lumber Company and its logging railroad that crossed the Flambeau near the golf course and ran east toward Patterson Lake and Springstead. He is searching for the ORIGINAL

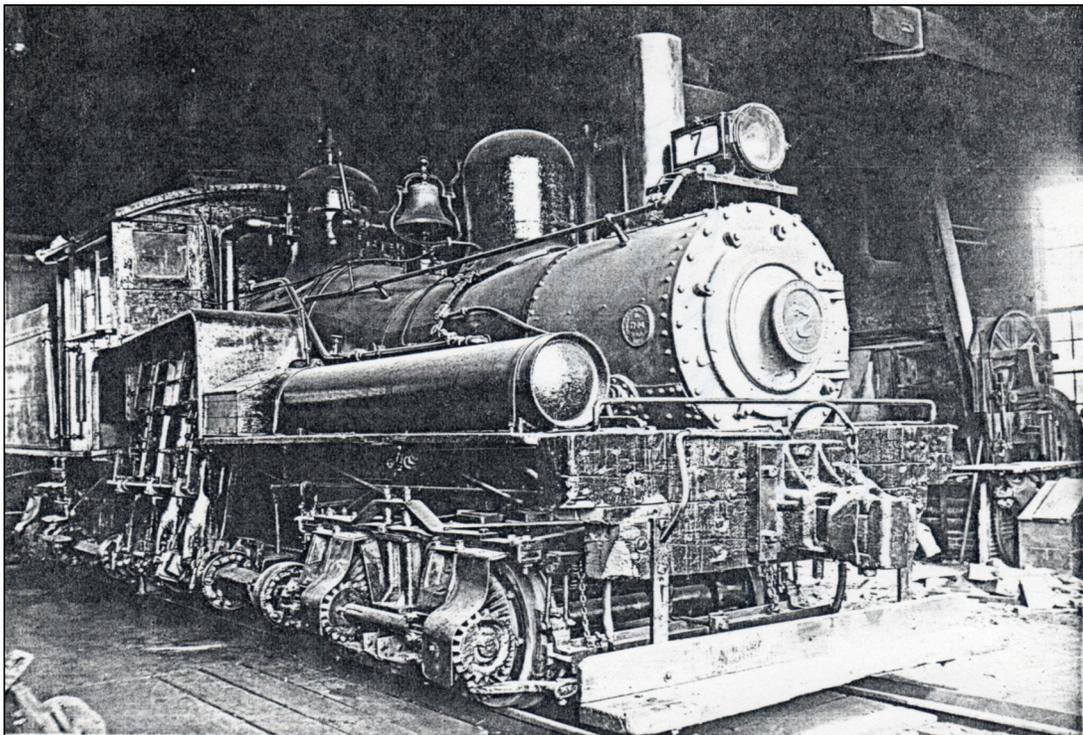
photograph of Shay Number 7. Pictured is a photocopy of the original. The original is desired to make a scan for Berg's research and also for the photographic archives of the Price County Historical Society.

Now you too can help Berg find the original photograph from which this copy was made:

Berg is also working on compiling a history of George Atwood and the Atwood Lumber and Manufacturing Company, once located on the west bank of the North fork of the Flambeau river in Park Falls, Wisconsin. He is searching for photographs and documents, diagrams, and correspondence, or recollections from this company.

Park Falls Lumber Company Shay Number 7 at the engine house in Park Falls, Wisconsin. Built as construction number 1704 by the Lima Locomotive & Machine Co., on June 19, 1906 for the Kirkpatrick Brothers and Collins Construction Company of Council Bluffs, Iowa. Sold to the United States Equipment Co., Chicago, Illinois. Sold to the Park Falls Lumber Company, Park Falls, Wisconsin. Sold August 19, 1926 to Edward Hines Hardwood & Hemlock Company at Park Falls. For sale on

June 30, 1928; sold to Forest County Lumber Company at Hiles, Wisconsin on August 21, 1929 and to the Hiles Lumber Company on January 16, 1930. Class B 45 ton, 2 truck, 3 cylinder locomotive, with standard gauge 32 inch drive wheels and wagon-top style boiler. Ernie Gustafson Collection. If you know where the original photograph is, and its owner is agreeable to allowing a digital scan of it, contact John L. Berg right away!



And there is more research...

John L. Berg is working on compiling a history of Pennington and early (before 1914) Prentice. He is searching for photographs and documents, diagrams, and correspondence or recollections pertaining to these locations.

If you have any of these items pertaining to Pennington, Prentice or the George Atwood and At-

wood Lumber Manufacturing Company and would like to allow them to be used in this research, Berg has the equipment to scan them at your residence. They will be catalogued with a title and your name as owner. If you have any of the materials you would like to share, contact him by mail at John L. Berg 6421 Evergreen Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin, 54494. Thank you!



The Soo Line owned the depot at Prentice when this photograph was taken by John L. Berg in 1982. Built at Pennington in 1898, it was moved on flat cars to Prentice in 1903. It was sold, along with the Lake States Division of the Soo Line Railroad to the Wisconsin Central Ltd. In 1987. WCL was purchased by the Canadian National Railroad, its present owner, in 2000. It is still used by the CNRR, 119 years later!

STEAM WAS IN PRENTICE 21 YEARS AGO! On October 5, 1996, the Soo Line Historical and Technical Society held its annual convention. The North Shore Railroad Museum in Duluth provided its DM&N Locomotive Number 14 and some passenger cars for an excursion from Rhinelander to Prentice and Rhinelander to Ladysmith. Here the Number 14 is idling next to the Prentice depot while passengers tour the building and enjoy refreshments. John L. Berg, photograph.



COMING EVENTS

The visual and performing arts have played an important role in the lives of Price County Residents from 1879 to today. Brantwood is hosting two significant art events, June 16-18, 2017!

June 17, 2:00 p.m. the grand opening of Finnish Folk Art.

The Brantwood community will be hosting an important display of Finnish Folk Art at the Brantwood Credit Union Gallery from June 17 through August 12, 2017. Jim Kurtti, editor of the Finnish American reporter will present a lecture on the importance of the Finnish experience in America. Music will be presented by Finn Power with debut of the Centennial Polka by Rod Maki. For more information contact 715-564-2253 or cyrilla@centurytel.net

Come to Palmquist's Farm in Brantwood on June 16, 17, or 18 for the Finnish play Eino & Toivo!

The theater was an important part of social life of Finnish immigrants during the early to mid-20th century. These were performed in the Finnish language at the Brantwood and Clifford Halls. One playbook has recently been found and translated into English. The play Eino & Toivo will be performed on June 16, 17, and 18, 2017 by local residents at Palmquist's Farm in Brantwood, under the direction of Joyce Summers.

These are community supported events by the Brantwood Credit Union, Central Wisconsin Finnish American Club, German Settlement History, Inc., Jump River Valley Historical Society, Knox Creek Heritage Center, Koskela House Finnish Museum, Price County Genealogical Society, and the Price County Historical Society.

After the all school reunion in 2016 there was a desire by former students and others with connections to the school to expand on the original bricks purchased to install the Fifield School Memorial on the grounds of the Price County Historical Society in Fifield. The vision was to create a brick plaza in front of the memorial. After this discussion Doug Severt approached the Society to see if they would partner with this project and they readily agreed.



If you attended the Fifield School at anytime you are eligible to order an engraved brick with your name and year of graduation even if consolidation or other life circumstances prevented graduation. In addition to students it would also be appropriate to memorialize a teacher, janitor, cook, bus driver, secretary, school board member or anyone else that was connected to the school. In that case the name and position of the person will be engraved on the brick. The bricks are \$50.00 each. To order send your check and your name and year of graduation or other information clearly indicated to Price County Historical Society, Attention Lorraine Pilch, Old Town Hall Museum, P.O. Box 156, Fifield, WI 54524. Any questions regarding the project should be directed to Doug Severt at dougsevert@cox.net or call 405-732-5449

PCHS Treasurer Report - 2nd Fiscal Quarter 2017

Checking Account:

Balance 3-31-17	25,692.23
April Deposits	279.93
April Disbursements	-169.14
May Deposits	2,085.00
May Disbursements	-508.03
June Deposits	
June Disbursements	
Balance 5-18-17	27,379.99

Savings Account

Balance 3-31-17	3,109.15
Interest	
Balance 5-18-17	3,109.15

Total Cash	<u>\$30,489.14</u>
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Designated Donations:*

Buildings & Grounds	3,018.74	General Maintenance
Buildings & Grounds	3,972.20	OTH Interior Painting (B&G)
Photo Preservation	781.70	
LS&ERR Fund	281.00	Publication of Berg LS&ERR book
Burant Memorial Fund	745.00	Plaque, painting
Bricks	600.00	
Mannequins	600.00	

Total Designated Funds	\$9,998.64
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*Designated Fund Donations are maintained in PCHS account at First National Bank, Park Falls. These funds are included in totals of cash on hand.

And finally, a word from your editor.

Greetings! By way of introduction, I am John L. Berg, a life member of the Price County Historical Society, a member of its Board, and a Price County land owner on the Pike Lake Chain. My wife Louise and I split our time between our cabin and our home near Wisconsin Rapids (where I was born and raised in nearby Port Edwards) and where I worked teaching school for 32 1/2 years. My parents built our cabin in the summer of 1960, and our family spent 12 straight summers there. It was from those summer experiences that I developed a deep and lasting interest in Price County's history. As you see, much of my interest revolves around the railroads and logging, but rest assured that I do have interests beyond those two topics! In fact I plan to present on various Price County history topics for the annual meeting through 2025, Lord willing. This fall's presentation is on Pennington and early Prentice.

I would like to take a moment to thank Laurie and Richard Pilch for their excellent work maintaining the high quality of the PCHS Newsletter! Laurie has researched and written a series of wonderful articles during the past years and Richard's expertise at layout has provided a visually appealing document for our readers! I have looked forward to the newsletter Laurie and Richard have produced, and now I will strive to reach and maintain the standards they have set.



Can anyone help us identify any of the individuals in this photograph? This photograph from 1907 of Larkin School appeared in *the book Country School Recollections II*. Larkin School was part of the Ogema School District and appeared in an 1890 plat book. The school closed in 1956, when it was consolidated with the Ogema State Graded School. Information from *Country School Recollections I*.

UPCOMING EVENTS

June 3 and 4 opening weekend. The Old Town Hall and Greenfield School Museums will be open every weekend from 11 to 3 p.m. through Labor Day.

June 24 Book signing by John L. Berg author of *The Lake Shore and Eastern: A Logging Railroad in North-Central Wisconsin*. The book signing along with a pie social will be held from 11 to 3 p.m.

August 19 Strawberry Shortcake Bonanza from 11 to 3 p.m. Come to the museums and also enjoy delicious home made strawberry shortcake and refreshments.

October 29 Annual Meeting Wisconsin Concrete Park, Phillips—Friends of Fred Smith Studio. Brief business meeting followed by a presentation by John L. Berg on the Prentice and Pennington area.

Check the events calendar on our website www.pricecountyhistoricalsociety.org for any additional events that may be added throughout the summer.

Price County Historical Society

Price County Historical Society
Old Town Hall Museum
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