



**Crow Wing County Museum & Research Library
Restored Sheriff's Residence**

NEWSLETTER

Museum
building
turns 100
this year!



MISSION STATEMENT

The Crow Wing County Historical Society is committed to preserving the history and telling the story of Crow Wing County.

STAFF

Pam Nelson
Director/Administrator
Newsletter Editor

Margaret O'Rourke
Assistant Administrator

Sue Duda
Administrative Assistant

The "old jail" located next to the historic court house on Laurel Street turns 100 this year! The red brick building was built in 1917 as the third county jail and sheriff's residence. Of the original thirteen cells, eight were located in the area where the first floor ramps are now. Four cells were located on the second floor: two women's and two juvenile. The two women's cells and a shower were saved during renovation. A padded cell and a men's bathroom was located in the present Baseball exhibit area on the first floor.

Between 1917 and 1962 Six sheriffs and their families lived in the house which is connected on the street side of the building . The first sheriff to live in the house was Claus A. Theorin and the last was Albert J. Krueger, who died while still sheriff. When Charles Warnberg was elected sheriff in 1962, he decided not to move into the house, and the residence then became the sheriff department's offices. The parlor was Sheriff Warnberg's office and the dining room was used as a lunch room. A woman was hired to cook for the prisoners and the kitchen continued to be used to prepare food. At times the hired cook lived in the bedrooms upstairs. The nursery became the detective's office. The sheriff's department moved to the Law Enforcement Center in 1979.

The local Rotary Club took on the special project of raising funds to remodel the building. A dedicated crew of volunteers renovated the sheriff's residence and gutted the cell block area. The sheriff's residence was restored first and opened to the public in 1982. The cell block took longer. The renovation for the residence included removing all of the plaster, so insulation could be added and the building rewired.



See page 3 pertaining to this plaque

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The floors were stripped, sanded, varnished and waxed and the walls were repapered with wall-paper similar to the original. The light fixtures throughout the residence are original as is the Persian rug in the parlor. The house was restored to depict a typical upper middle class home of the first decades of the 1900s. The furnishings are not original to any of the sheriff's families; almost everything has been donated by area residents. There are however a few artifacts on display that belonged to Al Krueger and Charles Warnberg, former sheriffs. Through generous donations, grants, and fundraising by area service organizations and individuals, the new museum was completed and formally dedicated on September 12, 1983.

The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Crow Wing County owns and maintains the building.

The process to start the Crow Wing County Historical Society began in 1923 as the vision of Leon E. Lum, a Brainerd attorney. In 1926 Lum willed \$500 and his handmade desk to begin a County Historical Society. He chose a few prominent citizens to organize the Society. In 1927 the Society was incorporated.

The Society opened a museum on June 16th 1931 in the old courthouse on 4th and Kingwood Streets. Later that year the museum moved to the basement of the new courthouse on Laurel Street and opened on February 6, 1932. The Museum served as the base for the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) Arts and Crafts Project. After the W.P.A. project ended, the Society was forced to close the Museum from July 1940 to February 1941. It closed again from 1942 to 1945 due to the "black-out", the war focus, and a lack of funds, and reopened in 1946.

By 1970 the Museum was overflowing with artifacts. Water damage and flooding forced the Museum to close for one year for renovation. Conservation of the collection was nearly

impossible in the cramped conditions. About the same time the Society was facing space problems. The County Board announced plans to build a new law enforcement center and to demolish the sheriff's residence and County Jail for parking space. The Society realized that the building would solve the museum's space problems and lobbied the County Board to preserve the building and to turn it over to the Historical Society. In 1976 the building as a museum was put on the general election ballot. By an overwhelming 82%, the voters told the County Board to lease the building to the Historical Society to use as a museum.

The Society's Museum, restored sheriff's residence, and the research library are enjoyed by every one of all ages!

It is still "the best kept secret". Come check it out—you won't be disappointed.



In the Fall 2016 Newsletter we featured the long standing members. Robert Rofidal was missed! We are sorry! Robert joined 10/01/95 (22 years!) Thanks for your support!

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President's Report

I have a short report today. It's just too hot!

However, we are very fortunate to have strong support for our county museum. We have had a record number of people come see our displays and they all liked what we have done and what we have.

Our 100th Birthday party celebration went well. We received the key from the county and we have to thank people of Crow Wing County for this effort to pass a resolution asking the county to turn the old jail over to the Historical Society. It has made a big difference in what we are able to accomplish.

Thanks to Executive Director, Pam and her staff for keeping our displays interesting and new. Next is the county fair and we could use volunteers to man the 4 buildings we have to maintain. Call the Museum at 829-3268 if you can help.

Looking forward to seeing you had the fair.

Don Samuelson
Board President



See you at the Crow Wing
County Fair!
Tuesday - Saturday
August 1 - 5
10 am to 10 pm
Midway open
until midnight

Greetings

**From Pamela Nelson,
Director/Administrator**

Fair time is almost upon us and the need for volunteers is critical! Please consider volunteering for one or more of the 80 three-hour shifts. Call us at the museum at 829-3268. Volunteers greet visitors and watch over the building. You may choose from 2 log homes, the schoolhouse, or the main museum building formerly called the General Store.

Since the last newsletter we have 3 new volunteers. They are Harold Holk, Sara Marsh, and Sandy Purdue. Each volunteer brings their talents and expertise to the museum. This allows us to keep the museum and research library operational. It is with much regret that we inform you our Experience Works person, Bonnie Novick, has moved to Omaha to be with her family. Bonnie was with us almost 4 years. We will miss her!!

Our building's centennial celebration was held on June 16th during Brainerd History Week. There was birthday cake, balloons, new exhibits and over 100 visitors. Staff and volunteers were busy preparing for our special day. Bob Jenkins did a wonderful job portraying Sheriff Claus Theorin, who was the sheriff at the time the building was built. We were fortunate to have Bob Nystrom a relative of the former sheriff on hand, to share stories about Claus that were passed on to him by his father. The local chapter of Red Cross was also incorporated in 1917. Assistant Sue Duda put together a nice exhibit with artifacts from our collections.

Another new exhibit features Special Olympic ice skating gold medalist Mike Padgett also known as the "Ice Man." Mike donated photos, medals, and costumes that are now on display. Carl Faust displayed finds from his adventures in privy digging. Mark Youngblood, outhouse archaeologist from White Bear Lake, gave a presentation to eager listeners pertaining to the art of privy digging and collecting the treasures.

The baggage cart that was located outside the museum has been up north in Bemidji being restored by Andy Mack. Andy has restored several baggage carts. The cart will soon arrive back home. Thanks Andy for preserving a little bit of our railroad history! A historical discovery was made thanks to social media. The Society received a donation of two original 1898 Laurel Street Bridge railings and a plaque (photo on first page). Through the Facebook group "Share history and stories about Brainerd Lakes Area" Mike McMillion, amateur historians Carl Faust and Andy Walsh first learned of the railings existence. They were being used for farm animal pens. Working with the County Facilities Manager, Reid Thiesse, with input from Carl Faust and history enthusiasts Jeremy Jackson, Ann M. Nelson and John Van Essen, the plan is to put them on permanent display in front of the museum. We have received generous donations to sandblast and paint the railings. Preserving our area history is important and the railings help to do this!

I want to thank all those who came to the museum for our Birthday celebration. Have a wonderful summer!

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Photos courtesy
Merci
Martinsen
Chamber
of Commerce
Videographer

We had enough visitors to give the building a partial Birthday hug during the celebration!



upper left: Bob Jenkins as Sheriff Theorin; above: Board President Don Samuelson presented Commissioner Paul Theide with a check and Theide gave Samuelson the key to the museum during the rededication ceremony. It has been 35 years since the original dedication in 1983. Lower left: Pequot Lakes Police Chief Eric Klang (sheriff from 2003 to 2006) and Bob Nystrom holding a portrait of former Sheriff and his Great Uncle Claus Theorin (sheriff from 1916 to 1922 / 1927 to 1930)

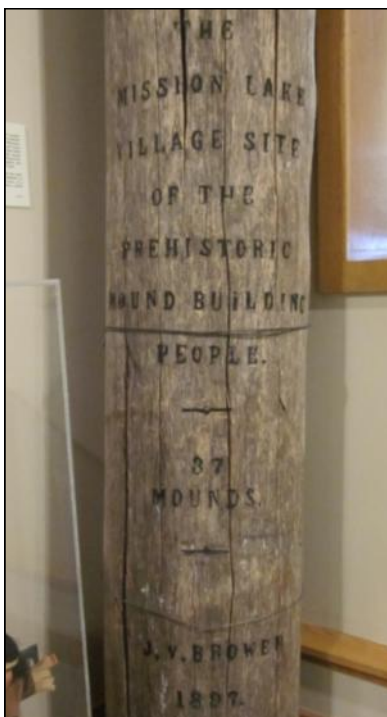


By: Lucille Kirkeby

As you walk up the ramp at the first level of the museum, one of the large artifacts that you encounter is an old weather beaten log that stands about six feet, five inches tall.

Carved on the log is the following: "Mission Lake Village, site of the prehistoric mound building people—37 Mounds, J. V. Brower."

According to museum records, the log was bulldozed up on the old Camp Farm in Mission Township, C. Wing Co. It was donated to the museum in 1946 by Dick Harrison of Crosby. To people visiting the museum, this scant identifying information near the log really doesn't do much to clear up any mystery surrounding the log.



To begin with, it's quite surprising that this log, a marker of a prehistoric village of mound builders, should survive at all. Graves, trails, village sites, etc. were marked by well-meaning people who wanted to preserve what they knew as a fact. They however, had no idea how quickly nature claims its own and leaves a place much like it was originally. Logs like this one can easily be lost. Insects, bacteria, birds, and decay set in and unless an event is chiseled in stone, soon no trace is found. The log was marked in 1895. This means that when it was recovered in 1946, it was about 50 years old. How did our log survive? One article mentioned that Brower treated his markers with ivory drop black, a paint which showed the lettering plainly for photography. Did this paint also help to preserve the log? It's a mystery that perhaps will never be completely solved.

Exactly who was Jacob Brower? A brief look at his life and background will help us understand his leaving evidence of his explorations. Jacob Brower, born in Michigan in 1844, is noted as a historian, archaeologist, anthropologist, land surveyor and explorer. Prior to Brower arriving on the scene, Joseph Nicollett had explored the upper Mississippi basin, and he along with other earlier explorers, had determined that the source of the Mississippi was Lake Itasca. It was fifty years later that Brower began his exploration and surveying of the area. Brower came to settle the dispute as to where the source of the Mississippi actually was. He agreed with earlier explorers and began plans to make the area a park. He succeeded and is known as the Father of Itasca State Park.

In addition to his work at Itasca, he explored the upper Mississippi area and recorded discoveries of Indian mounds, early prehistoric settlements and the early history of the area. This explains the marker which we are so lucky to have in our collection.

Because he was involved with so much in his life, we cannot leave without mentioning some of his many other endeavors and achievement. In his early life he fought under Henry Sibley in the Indian wars and other battles. He platted the town of Browerville and the town was named for him. He was the first auditor of Todd County. For his anthropology and natural history work, he became recognized as a work authority on the upper Mississippi basin. In 1871, he took up law and was admitted into practice in 1873. He became the county attorney for Todd County. He was associated with the ownership of two newspapers and was involved with the Sauk Centre Northern Railroad, later a part of the Great Northern.

One really wonders how one man could be involved with so much. Although Brower wasn't from the Brainerd area, he left his footprint here in the form of a carved log indicating the site of a prehistoric Indian village. If you are interested in Brower, we have three rolls of microfilm of his field notes. These microfilms document his exploration and are easy reading because of the clarity of the handwriting.



NEW MEMBERS

We thank you for your support!!

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Nokay Lake	

Thanks!

*(Donations were designated for the restoration of our fair buildings.)

Douglas A. Birk Remembered

Renowned Historian and Archaeologist Douglas A. Birk, passed away unexpectedly at home in Pine River on 8 March 2017.

Doug developed a keen interest in regional history and archaeology while still in grade school. In sixth grade, he learned about Lt. Zebulon Pike's Mississippi expedition of 1805-06 and Doug envisioned a possibility that Pike had crossed the Birk family's resort property on Norway Lake while on his return from Leech Lake.



Due to his inquisitiveness about the past, Doug soon discovered evidence of an Indian village on the resort property; and while in high school, he was already interviewing early residents regarding local history, and mapping old logging railroad grades in Cass and Crow Wing Counties.

Then during the weekend of 19th - 21st September 1958 during a Scout Camporee, Doug along with the rest of the Pine River Boy Scout Troop, was led on a historical walking tour of the Old Crow Wing town site by John "Pete" Humphrey. For Doug the information provided on that hike was an "eye-opener" into the rich history of Central Minnesota. He credited that tour as being a substantial influence for his decision to pursue a career in archaeology.

After earning a degree in Anthropology from the University of Minnesota, Doug was then drafted into the Army and served three tours of duty in Vietnam.

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Thank you for donations

Monetary

Brainerd American Legion #255
Long Lake Home Owner's Association
State Farm grant - Lois Jubie
For the painting of the schoolhouse

Lavonne Danzl & Sheryl Tollefson
*1898 Laurel St. railing
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In Memory of:
Douglas Birk

Given by:
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In Memory of:
Pete Humphrey

Given by: Douglas Birk

What Used To Be...

By Brian Marsh

In this continuing series about towns that sprung up in Crow Wing County as the result of iron ore mining, but only to decline when the mines shut down, we now take a look at Trommald.

This little town wasn't always known by the name Trommald. When it was platted on June 3, 1913, the name it was given was Iron Mountain. By 1917, the population was 255. Also in 1917, the town became incorporated, and the name was changed to Trommald in honor of A.G. Trommald, who was the popular

Register of Deeds for Crow Wing County. Part of the reason for the name change is that it was too similar to Mountain Iron, another mining town, which is on the Mesabi iron Range.

By 1920, this thriving community was served by several hotels, a dry goods store, a grocery store, a hardware store, a café, a barbershop, a theater, a weekly newspaper, a school, and a church.

Unlike other mining towns in the county, which were in the proximity of a single mine, Trommald had several mines surrounding it. Among those were the Merritt #1, #2, #3, and #4, the Clark, the Bessemer, the Adber, the Ferro, the Joan #4, and the Hoch. However, many of these didn't last very long, as several were gone by 1920.

As the mines played out and closed down, the population started to diminish. It reached its peak in 1920 with 301 residents. By 1930, it was 242, and in 2010 it was down to 98.



(Continued from Page 6) Upon leaving the army, he went to work at the Minnesota Historical Society and he gained valuable experience practicing archaeology all over the state.

Much of Doug's work centered on the European Colonial Period in Minnesota and Western Wisconsin; he became an expert on the fur trade history, and early transportation routes and transportation methods. The list of his accomplishments is remarkable. At Grand Portage, he was the first archaeologist in the state to do an underwater excavation using a grid system. His research showed that the Minnesota Historical Society North West Company Fur Post, on the Snake River was actually built by John Sayers. He discovered, excavated, and helped establish The Little Elk Heritage Preserve in Morrison County. In 1984, Doug and his team rediscovered the location and excavated Pike's Fort along the Mississippi River south of Little Falls.

Doug was an advocate of historical preservation efforts. Doug identified and helped re-locate the 1849 Beaulieu House back to its original location. It has been restored to its original appearance and it stands now as the iconic centerpiece of Crow Wing State Park. He also spearheaded the project which prevented Crow Wing Island and an 80-acre peninsula at the confluence of the Crow Wing and Mississippi rivers from being subdivided for residential development. Crow Wing Island is the winged-shaped island located at the mouth of the Crow Wing River. It is the namesake of the county, river, state park, and lost town. Today Crow Wing Island and the peninsula are preserved as a part of Crow Wing State Park. Doug was an active member and supporter of the Pine River Heritage Group North, and a fundamental force in saving the Pine River Depot.

Throughout his career, Doug was an astute researcher and meticulous writer. His fieldwork and research have provided substantial and valuable insight into the history of Minnesota. He is the author of numerous articles and studies on Minnesota's past, and in 1986 he was selected by the Humanities Commission as Minnesota's Independent Scholar of the Year. He co-founded the Institute of Minnesota Archaeology (IMA); Doug also served as Chair of the IMA, and vice president of the state's professional forum, the Council for Minnesota Archaeology.

Doug was a member and supporter of several historical societies. Upon his passing, the Crow Wing County Historical Society received numerous donations in memory of Doug Birk.

Written by Jeremy Jackson 10 July 2017

CROW WING COUNTY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM & LIBRARY - EST. 1927

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PHONE: 218-829-3268 FAX: 828-4434 E-MAIL: history@crowwing.us

WEB: <http://www.crowwinghistory.org>

HOURS: TUESDAY THRU SATURDAY 10 AM - 3 PM (Closed Major Holidays & Holiday Weekends)

Call the museum to schedule appointments or tours after hours.

CWCHS Yearly Membership Levels:

\$500.00 - Patron	\$50.00 - Sustaining
\$250.00 - Benefactor	\$40.00 - Family or Non-Profit Org.
\$100.00 - Booster	\$30.00 - Supporting Individual
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To become a member of the Society, send your name, address, and telephone number along with your membership dues to the **Crow Wing County Historical Society, P.O. Box 722, Brainerd, MN 56401**. If you would like to give a gift membership to the Society, please send the name and address of the person for whom the membership is intended. Memorials of loved ones are also accepted. Donations can be sent to the same address and are tax deductible. Membership forms are available on our website or at the Museum. You may also choose to pay on line using our website PayPal account.

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Listed on the National
Register of Historic Places.

