

Crow Wing County Historical Society Museum & Library - EST. 1927

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PRESERVING HISTORY NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 41, No. 2



MISSION:

THE CROW WING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY MUSEUM IS THE PREMIER INSTITUTION COMMITTED TO COLLECTING, PRESERVING, AND DISPLAYING ARTIFACTS AND INFORMATION RELATING TO THE HISTORY OF CROW WING COUNTY IN ORDER TO PROVIDE EDUCATION, ENJOYMENT, AND RESEARCH MATERIALS TO THE PUBLIC.

STAFF:

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
NEWSLETTER EDITOR

MARGARET O'ROURKE
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DAYLA HART
COLLECTIONS
ASSISTANT

The Dust Settles

Change is good. Change is also hard work. There have been many changes at the Crow Wing County Historical Society over the past two years. Following the nearly half-a-million-dollar restoration of the building, we began the construction of the new James Olav Saboe Library and also started preparations for our attic storage shelving for which we received a Legacy Grant of \$47,649. These wonderful improvements are almost finished. That construction comes with a lot of moving, organizing, and dust. It has been challenging, but we are thankful for all we have received. Our staff and volunteers are diligently getting our attic storage organized, which will allow us to reopen our third floor exhibit area. We are also working to get the library open for public use.

Along with these big changes, some wonderful smaller changes have occurred. In addition to updated landscaping, we added some new items to our front lawn. The first is a brand new sign designed and built by the Central Lakes College Welding Department. The Historical Society reached out to the department when it was clear that our old sign was beyond repair. The wooden supports were rotting and the paint was peeling. Instructor David Otto said that we fit their profile perfectly—they like to partner with local organizations. A CLC welding class designed and constructed the sign in exchange for a donation towards a welding scholarship. Crow Wing County Facilities assisted with the installation of the sign (photo courtesy of Steve Kohls/Brainerd Dispatch). At the same time, they installed a bridge railing from the 1898 Laurel Street Bridge. It is wonderful to see the railing return to Laurel Street after spending years being used as a hog fence. The museum is a great place to view the railing and learn about the bridge. Lastly, thanks to the generosity of Brainerd Hardwoods, Inc. and Crow Wing County, we have installed a new front door on the Sheriff's Residence. Taking design cues from old photographs of the facade, the door is perfectly suited to the building. It was the final touch to the restoration of the building's exterior.

As the dust settles, the Society is eager to thrive within our updated space. The museum is now safer, more organized, and more welcoming to visitors. Additionally, our renovated spaces are ready for updated exhibits, which you will see over the next few years. Everyone will be invited to a grand reopening once everything is back in its place.

Volunteers: Unpaid, but Priceless

On January 14th we hosted our annual volunteer luncheon for all who have contributed their valuable time over the course of the past year. Every bit of time that is given to the Historical Society helps us to accomplish our mission. This year, we honored two individuals who put in the most hours in 2019: Brian Marsh and Sandy Purdue. Beyond the amount of time they spend, what makes these two so valuable are their exceptional communication and customer service abilities. Brian works three days a week in our research library. He answers research requests and works on research projects. He is a great resource and is always pleasant. Sandy does a lot of behind-the-scenes and collections related tasks. She really shines while giving tours to visitors and school groups by bringing the collections to life with stories. We are always looking for additional volunteers, if you are interested.

Another local history volunteer opportunity is available through the BRAINERD PUBLIC SCHOOLS ARCHIVES (BPS Archives). They need a volunteer to assist the volunteer archivist/curator in performance of activities related to the missions of BPS Archives, on a part - time, regular basis. To apply, contact John Erickson, BPS Archives, Brainerd Public Schools, 804 Oak Street, Brainerd, Minnesota 56401, by mail, or by email at bps.history@isd181.org, or by phone at 218 - 330 - 1780.

President's Report

Let's hope this long icy winter is over soon. The Museum remodeling is almost complete so we are now looking forward to a grand re-opening. It should take place this summer. I think you will be impressed with all that has been done. We have a new library for your research. It will be filled with a lot of Crow Wing County History and a computer for help in your research. Our research and library volunteers do an outstanding job. You will be amazed what they can do to help you. Our volunteers and staff do an outstanding job in keeping all the artifacts on display, and they are there to help you or your group on a tour so you don't miss anything.

So now we are planning our annual dinner and meeting. We hope we can get another great turnout. It will be in April, so watch for the invitation. If you would like to help as a volunteer, you would sure be welcome. Just contact our Director, Hillary, at (218)829-3268. Hope to see you at the dinner and have a safe rest of the winter.

Don Samuelson
President



FROM THE DIRECTOR

My father has recently become intrigued by genealogy. Through my father's research I learned that I not only have one, but several revolutionary war veterans in my lineage including the last surviving revolutionary war veteran in Maryland dying in 1845 at the age of 96. This is especially interesting for a girl who grew up much more closely connected to her more recently immigrated Scandinavian roots. The branches of family trees are wide and diverse. I think of my own children and the sprawl of their ancestors. We are all just people, but our history certainly makes life more meaningful and interesting.

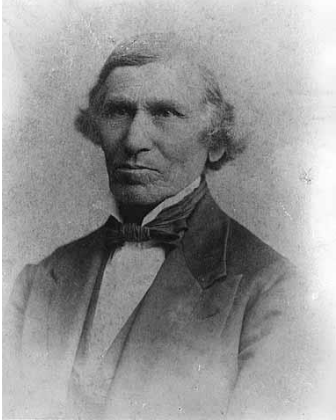
Genealogy is becoming much more popular and accessible through DNA testing and websites like Ancestry.com. It is important to check other sources as well. A large part of what we do in our research library is assist people with their family genealogy. Most often, people come looking for obituaries. Nothing thrills me more than when someone stops in for basic material and leaves with information and insight they didn't have before. I recently helped a visitor who ended up with a full transcribed interview of her grandfather along with family photos including a portrait of her grandfather taken at age 4. This reaffirms the importance of historical societies and their role in preserving history. It is understandable that families like to keep their treasures, but when they are in a museum, they will be accessible to the public and properly taken care of for centuries to come.

Sincerely,

Hillary Swanson

People From Our Past

By Brian Marsh



This is the story of how one man, singlehandedly, was responsible for the direction that development took place in early Crow Wing County.

Clement H. Beaulieu was born at Lac du Flambeau, Wisconsin Territory, on September 10, 1811 to a father of French descent and a mother who was the daughter of a Chippewa Indian chief.

He had been engaged with the American Fur Company in Fond du Lac when, in 1837, he established a trading post near the Crow Wing River. It wasn't until 1849 that he arrived in the old village of Crow Wing to become a permanent resident. It was there that he became a prosperous businessman.

In 1856, the Crow Wing settlement was platted. Also that same year, Beaulieu, being part Chippewa, received scrip entitling him to 80 acres of land, and he chose land in the townsite of Crow Wing to be his own. He chose that particular land as he speculated that someday a railroad would go through Crow Wing.

As it happened, that originally was the plan. The Northern Pacific Railroad was looking to build a line west from Duluth to the Pacific Ocean and needed to find a place to build tracks across the Mississippi River. It decided that Crow Wing would be the spot to cross the river, and it needed to purchase land for a right-of-way. Beaulieu was the person who had the land that the railroad was in need of.

When it came time for the sale of the land, Beaulieu decided that he wanted to make a killing on this deal. He set an asking price that was far more than the railroad was willing to pay. Attempts to negotiate a lower price went nowhere as Beaulieu wouldn't budge on his price. He probably figured that he had the railroad over a barrel, and that if it wanted his land, it would have to pay his price.

The railroad refused to pay that price and decided to find an alternative spot to cross the river. It settled on a location a few miles north of Crow Wing, which it then developed into the town of Brainerd, upon which it then located its headquarters of operation.

Thus, Beaulieu's singular greed resulted in two things occurring: 1) The growth of Brainerd as the economic center of Crow Wing County and 2) The quick demise of the village of Crow Wing, which was virtually a ghost town within 10 years. If he had been more reasonable, Brainerd, most likely, would have never come in existence.

Clement H. Beaulieu moved to the White Earth reservation in 1873 and passed away there on January 2, 1893.



Fun Fact: Beaulieu's Crow Wing house (pictured here) is still standing and is located in the Crow Wing State Park.

From the Collection



The Maghan “doll house” was acquired in 2017 and was featured at the holiday open house that year. Since, it has had a home in our third floor exhibit area. It was also recently displayed in the Zonta Christmas House and was thoroughly enjoyed by the public. The house is fascinating because it is more than a doll house—it is an exact replica at ¾-inch to 1-foot scale of the family’s original home, including the furniture and family portraits. Even the stained glass windows and interior lights were specially made to duplicate the home’s originals.

Robert and Alice Maghan settled in Crow Wing County in 1884. They homesteaded for twenty years on Partridge Lake in Bay Lake Township before building their large home on Crooked Lake in Bay Lake Township in 1904. They raised 12 children in the home. Years later, with extensive renovations planned for the house, the Maghan children built a model of the house to keep a memory of their childhood home. When searching for more information on the Maghans, I was consumed by the stories found in our research library. Multiple interviews recorded with the family transport the reader to another not-so-distant time when children attended a one-room schoolhouse. Another tells of a woman who married her cousin to avoid the poor farm because she simply could not make it on her own after her husband died. George Maghan (1904-1993) spoke of his family’s relationship with Native

Americans. The following is an excerpt from an interview with George from 1981:

WHEN MY FOLKS CAME HERE, A TRIBE OF INDIANS CAME RIGHT THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR AND WERE HOLDING THEIR WAR DANCES AT THE TIME. THEY MOVED FROM THERE AND WENT ACROSS, OVER THE PLAIN, YOU CAN SEE BY THE HOUSES...THERE THEY HAVE THE INDIAN CEMETARY. THERE WAS A LITTLE TRAGEDY THERE BECAUSE THEY WERE BULLDOZED UNDER. IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN KEPT IN A STATE PARK. I REALLY FEEL THAT WAY, A BEAUTIFUL STATE PARK. THE INDIANS, AS WE KNEW THEM, WERE SOME OF THE BEST NEIGHBORS WE EVER HAD... APPROXIMATELY 30 MILLION PEOPLE HAVE GONE BY ME IN THE WORK I DID INCLUDING THE PRESENT QUEEN OF ENGLAND AND ALL THE PRESIDENTS FROM HOOVER UP TO KENNEDY. I WAS A---GUARD. BUT ONE OF THE MOST IMPRESSIVE MEN THAT I EVER SAW OUT IN THE FIELD HERE - I SAW AN INDIAN CHIEF GO BY, NOT WITH A BIRCHBARK CANOE, A BIG HIGHLAND FRONT AND BACK. HE WAS IN THE FRONT CANOE AND THE FEATHERS ON HIS HEAD AND BACK DOWN TO THE CENTER AND 2 BRAVES PADDLING EACH CANOE. I THINK THERE WAS 4 CANOES. THE BRAVES HAD ONLY LOIN CLOTHS ON, BUT I HAVE NEVER SAW MORE TOTAL COMPLETE OBEDIENCE THAN I SAW IN THOSE INDIANS. AND TO ME I NEVER SAW A MAN THAT REACHED THE GREATNESS THAT, THAT MAN DID. THAT IS TAKING CHURCHILL, ROOSEVELT, AND ALL THE OTHERS, I NEVER SAW THE DIGNITY THAT THAT MAN HAD. I DIDN'T KNOW UNTIL ABOUT 50 YEARS LATER THAT I WAS SEEING CHIEF NEGATCHEE (?)



ON HIS WAY UP TO THE RED LAKE RESERVATION...WE WERE CLOSELY CONNECTED WITH THE INDIANS. TO SAY WE LIKED THEM WOULD BE PRETTY MILD AND OF COURSE WE HAD OUR DIFFERENCES TOO. BUT IF I SAY ANYTHING THAT MIGHT BE OFFENSIVE TO THEM, IT IS NOT MEANT TO BE. IF IT IS ONE RACE OF PEOPLE I HAVE A LOT OF RESPECT FOR, IT IS THE ACHOO(?) GOOD INDIAN, THEIR CULTURAL BACKGROUND AND UNDERSTANDING. THERE WERE NOT HOSTILE AND IF A PERSON CAME UP IN THIS YARD HERE THAT I DIDN'T WANT HERE THEY WOULD FOLLOW THEM UP ANS SEE. WE NEVER LOCKED OUR HOUSE FOR 40 OR 50 YEARS AND WE MOVED INTO THIS HOUSE AND IT IS NEVER LOCKED. I NEVER HAD ANYTHING STOLEN FROM US IN AND HALF THE PEOPLE COME OFF THE LAKE. BUT GOING BACK TO THE INDIANS, WHEN TB HIT, THEY CALLED IT CONSUMPTION THEN, IT PRACTICALLY WIPED THEM OUT. THERE WAS A GIRL NANCY, BEAUTIFUL, WHAT YOU WOULD CALL AN INDIAN PRINCESS, AND MY SISTER HAD CALLED (NOW SHE HAS FORGOT ABOUT IT) BUT SHE WAS GOING TO SEE HER AND NANCY WAS DYING THEN OF CONSUMPTION AND HOW BADLY SHE WANTED TO LIVE BUT YOU SEE THEY HAD NO RESISTANCE TO THIS WHITE MAN DISEASE. THE WHITE MAN HAD GAINED SOME RESISTANCE TO IT BUT THE INDIAN HAD NOT. SO THE INDIANS WOULD COME OVER AND WRAP ON THE KITCHEN DOOR. MY DAD OPENED THE DOOR AND THE INDIAN SAID "MAKE A COFFIN, SQUAW DIE." SO MY DAD HAD WHITE PINE BOAT LUMBER UP THERE AND I REMEMBER HIM GRUMBLING ABOUT USING SO MUCH OF HIS BOAT LUMBER, TOO, HE WOULDN'T HAVE ANY LEFT. WELL ANYWAY THEY WENT UP THERE AND GOT THE WHITE PINE AND MADE A COFFIN FOR THIS INDIAN WOMAN. THEN MY MOTHER TOOK A SHEET OFF THE BED AND WASHED IT AND PUT IT IN FOR LINING. THEN THE WHITES, HOMESTEADERS WOULD GO TO THE FUNERAL AND THERE THEY WOULD HAVE (I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS MEDICINE MAN OR WHO) WOULD PRAY TO THE GREAT WHITE SPIRIT AND HEAVEN WAS THE HAPPY HUNTING GROUND. NOW HOW FAR OFF WERE THEY FROM RELIGION TODAY? NOW I THINK SOME PEOPLE ARE GOING TO BE SURPRISED WHEN THEY GET UP THERE AND THEY ARE GOING TO SEE AN AWFUL LOT OF INDIANS THERE.



Thank You Volunteers!

Bill & Sandy Ash	Julie Jo Larson
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Lucille Kirkeby	Jessica Williams
Ted Kotyk	Martina Yount
Brennan Larson	Board Members

A HISTORY LESSON...

THE STEREOSCOPE



By: Lucille Kirkeby

Anyone taking a leisurely stroll around the museum will come across artifacts that are uncommon if not completely foreign. Even our cataloger comes across items she has difficulty identifying.

Look into the parlor and focus your attention to the table on the right hand side of the door. You should notice a contraption that seems to invite you to pick it up, hold it to your eyes and look through its lenses. Only after you place a card in the card holder will you see a single three dimensional image. If you are of the older generation you will recognize

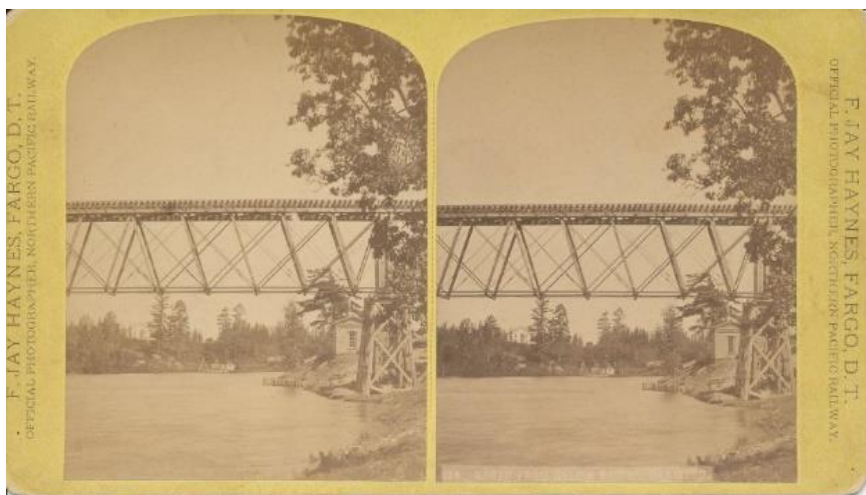
a stereoscope. The original was invented in 1832 by Charles Wheatstone. It went through many changes to become what you see on the table. The stereoscope would produce a three dimensional effect. A person could view separate images, a left eye view and a right eye view of the same scene and come up with a single three dimensional view. Wheatstone's viewer used drawings since regular photography hadn't yet been perfected.



Others worked on coming up with a more perfect viewer. The most notable individual was writer Oliver Wendell Holmes. He complained that the viewer gave him headaches. He created a handheld viewer which caught on.

How did the stereoscope work? Two photographs of the same image were taken from slightly different angles and were presented simultaneously to each eye. This recreated natural vision. Each eye saw the picture from a slightly different angle. Each picture was focused by a separate lens. Each eye saw a picture which was taken a few inches apart, but focused on the same point. This created the three dimensional effect.

Cards with two views of the same subject were used. Each card was about 7 inches long and 3.5 inches wide with two pictures. The card was placed in a card holder that came with the stereoscope. Today early viewers can be costly and the cards vary in price depending on the subject.



You are probably familiar with the View Master that took the place of the stereoscope. The View Master was a stereoscopic device also, but in a more compact form. It did not have the long cards, but rather a circular card with images to view. It was a popular toy because it began to feature kid friendly pictures. It can be purchased as a novelty toy even today for under \$20. The original cost was \$2.00. The reels were three for \$1.00. Of course, viewing three dimensional pictures such as you find on these two gadgets doesn't fascinate the modern young. Television does a much better job of duplicating reality.

BOARD OPPORTUNITIES

The Crow Wing County Historical Society is looking for new members to join our Board of Directors in 2020. If you are interested in history, enjoy collaborative planning, and have time to dedicate to improving our organization, please consider applying. Board member duties include, but are not limited to:

- Defining and perpetuating the Society's mission.
- Serving as an ambassador for the Society.
- Involvement in strategic planning and development of long-range goals.
- Developing and implementing the Society's annual budget and monitoring fiscal responsibility.
- Hiring, supporting, and evaluating the Museum's Executive Director.
- Playing an active role in fundraising.
- Be a Crow Wing County Historical Society member in good standing.

Board members meet on the third Tuesday of every month and occasionally at other times as business requires. Board members are elected in April and serve a three-year term. If you are interested, please contact the Museum at (218)829-3268 or Hillary.Swanson@crowwing.us.

Supporting County/Municipality

Crow Wing County
City of Brainerd

Supporting Townships

Crow Wing
Garrison
Ideal
Irondale
Long Lake
Nokay Lake
Oak Lawn
Platte Lake
Roosevelt
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Thank You!

We thank the following
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The Crow Wing County Historical Society Museum, Sheriff's Residence, and Research Library is located next to the historic Courthouse

Phone: 218-829-3268 Fax: 218-828-4434

Email: history@crowwing.us Web: www.crowwinghistory.org

Hours: Tuesday-Saturday 10AM-3PM (closed major holidays and holiday weekends)

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 |
| \$75.00 – Sponsor | \$20.00 – Individual |

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 can also pay online using PayPal.

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

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