

Crow Wing County

HISTORICAL SOCIETY
MUSEUM & LIBRARY - EST. 1927

THROWBACK
EDITION!

WINTER 2021 PRESERVING HISTORY NEWSLETTER VOLUME 42, No. 1

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.

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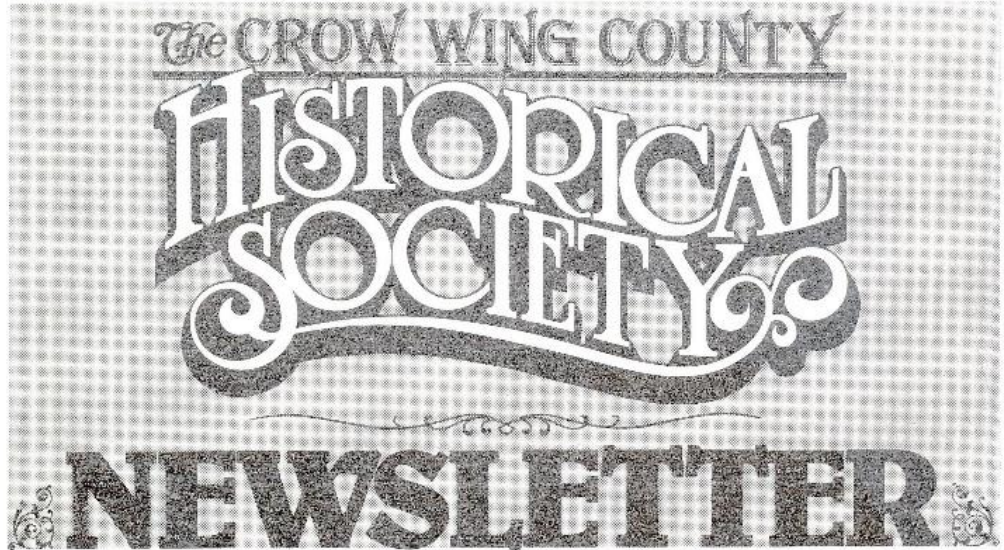
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Established in 1927



12,000 YEARS AGO a huge bison—a buffalo of type now extinct—was wearing down this enormous molar on vegetation on the site of present Crow Wing County, when the vast convulsions of the last Great Ice Age suddenly buried him.

● **NEWSLETTER**
VOLUME ONE, NUMBER ONE
SPRING 1975



Volume 4, Number 2

Spring, 1984

All the history
that fits to
print if it
fits.

FREE FREE FREE FREE!!!!

THE CROW WING COUNTY HISTORICAL MUSEUM
HIGHLIGHTS

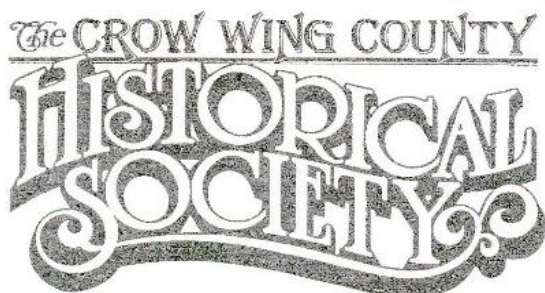
A splendid
time is
guaranteed
for all.

Vol. One No. One

November, 1975

Brainerd, Minnesota

This monthly publication is intended to bring to you more understanding of historical objects at the Crow Wing County Historical Museum. As a continuing information-bulletin of the Crow Wing Historical Society we invite comments and suggestions in ways we might be able to improve our services to the people of Crow Wing County. Any questions pertaining to a certain artifact could possibly be included in next month's HIGHLIGHTS. Letters can be delivered to the Museum in person or mailed to the Court House, Brainerd, Minnesota 56401. Membership to the Historical Society is \$1 a year— includes Newsletter, meetings, and WOW!



HISTORIAN

Volume 19, Number 1

Winter 1997

The **CROW WING HISTORIAN**

BRAINERD, MINN.

CROW WING COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
BICENTENNIAL EDITION 1976

POUALAK BOWL

Description by John E. Swift
C.W.H.S. Museum Designer

Discovered by F. T. Gustavson on October 15, 1930, the Poulak Bowl is the only culinary earthen vessel of this type ever found intact. It was unearthed in an underground ruin four feet below surface level approximately three miles north of Pequot Lakes, just north of a long parallel mound in the Poulak group.

This rare specimen is part of the fabulous Gustavson Collection housed in the Museum. It is said to be of the type made by early Indian Mound-Builders, people of Asiatic background who lived in our country 300 to 1000 years ago.



Former museum Curator, Judy Brubaker, with Poulak Bowl

COVER STORY

A BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF F.T. GUSTAVSON

by John E. Swift

F.T. Gustavson was a groceryman, one-time mayor and resident of Pequot Lakes in the 1930's.

He explored numerous areas in the Crow Wing County and accumulated a very interesting and unusual collection of Indian artifacts. Many of these specimens are of utmost historical importance to the history of the county's earliest peoples.

He was Superintendent of the Chippewa Museum in Cass Lake. Mr. Gustavson also wrote articles for the St. Paul Press in 1931, the Northland Times in 1937, the Minnesota Conservationist in 1935 and 1937, the Long Bow Country magazine in 1937 and was the author of the poem IN THE NORTHWOODS, published in the Vacationland News in the year 1933.

Mr. Gustavson lectured to many groups and organizations including the Crow Wing County Historical Society in 1934.

In the year 1949, the Crow Wing County Historical Society acquired the Gustavson collection of prehistoric and historical relics in their original cases as they were displayed at the Minnesota State Fair in 1936. Through correspondence between Hilding Swanson and the wife of the late F.T. Gustavson, the final arrangements were made to transport this collection to Brainerd.

As a current employee at the C.W.C.H. Museum, I would like to cordially invite everyone to see this fine collection. I am sure that you, as an interested individual, will definitely enjoy what we have on display.

IN THE NORTHWOODS

In the northwoods by the lakeshore
 When the birds begin to sing,
 Oh! What art for those who treasure
 What the artists cannot bring.
 All the colors of the rainbow
 Blend together in the scene
 That each morning by the lakeshore
 Makes men pious and serene.



In the northwoods by the lakeshore
 When the evening sun is low,
 Gentle breezes whisper sweetly
 Peace, be still all here below.
 There's where tired minds find leisure,
 Rest, beneath those skies that glow,
 For an evening by the lakeshore
 Carefree slumber will bestow.

In the northwoods by the lakeshore
 Let me dwell, where I may sing
 Like the birds, from inspiration,
 Melodies of life and spring.
 Harmonies of blending music
 Soulful solace to me bring
 Every day there by the lakeshore
 Peace surrounds me like a ring

In the northwoods by the lakeshore
 Man existed long ago;
 Nature made full provisions
 For his needs, and comforts too,
 Food, and shelter, clothing,
 Inabundance near at hand.
 Carefree there he reared his children
 Long 'fore culture ruled the land.

By P.T. Gustavson
 Taken from the Vacationland News, Volume 1 No. 8
 Thursday, July 20, 1933

cover design by
 JOHN SWIFT

President's Report

Like everybody, we just stay at home. Let's hope things get back to normal soon. Your Board of Directors has the meeting by virtual, which isn't as good but it works for now. With our new library now completed, it would be nice to have a grand opening to show it off. All we can do is wait and see. Well at least our staff is able to get a lot of work done catching up on displays and getting things organized. We miss our expert librarian and researcher, Lucille Kirkeby. She had a fall, but is recuperating. Another volunteer we will miss is Ron Crocker. Ron passed away last fall and his volunteer work at our museum and at the fairgrounds was so helpful to our staff. So stay safe, wear your mask, and pray we all get through these tough times.

Don Samuelson, Board President

FROM THE DIRECTOR

It is understood that times have been hard. With all of the negative, I have seen one positive—extra time. I have had extra time with my family. Extra time outside. With the museum closed, staff has had extra time to do things that have been set aside. While cleaning and organizing, I found archived newsletters. I was proud to see what a legacy I follow. I decided to revive two of the articles (see page 2 and 5) and include some of the old headers. I hope some of them look familiar to long-time members.

Collections Assistant, Dayla Hart has had extra time to sort through and organize objects. She has regathered the F.T. Gustavson collection. Some items, including the Poulak Bowl are, unfortunately, no longer in our collection after being transferred to the Minnesota Historical Society decades ago. We still have many remaining items that will now be back on display.

Many treasures were discovered while organizing and during our attic shelving project. New exhibits throughout the museum will feature these items. Only time will tell when we are able to reopen. It is difficult with our limited staff and unusual building to follow social distancing and sanitizing guidelines. We will be excited to welcome you back to an utterly new museum including the now complete, beautiful James Olav Saboe Library.

Take care,

Hillary Swanson

People From Our Past

By Brian Marsh

As white settlers moved steadily west in the middle of the 19th century, one group of people was either among them or preceded them, and that group was made up of Christian missionaries. Some tended to the needs of the settlers, while others were engaged in converting Native Americans. One of the latter of these was the Rev. James Lloyd Breck.

Born in Philadelphia, PA in 1818, he was ordained in 1842 in Wisconsin as a priest in the Episcopal Church and moved into what is now Minnesota in 1850. In 1852, he started a mission church on the east shore of Gull Lake, just west of present-day Highway 371, to work with converting the Ojibwe population to the Christian faith. He named the mission St. Columba and it was the first Native American Christian church in the United States that was west of the Mississippi River. Many of you have heard of St. Columbo Road and Mission Road in that area.



In 1855, he married Jane Maria Mills, one of the teachers at the St. Columba mission. He continued his work here until 1857, when he moved to Faribault to work with another priest to begin a mission school to train clergy to work in Minnesota missions. In 1867, he moved to Benicia, CA, where he passed away in 1876.

He was called “The Apostle of the Wilderness”, and although his stay in Crow Wing County was a short five years, he played a very important part in spreading the Christian message in the area.



HUNTING HERE 100 YEARS AGO...

Even a hundred years ago in the 1870's, local sportsmen complained about the hunting. Gone were the buffalo, elk and antelope that once roamed the area in herds. According to an 1877 edition of Forest & Stream Magazine, "The locomotives of a half-dozen railway lines rumble out continually... all the country round about is daily walked over and beaten up by the resident gunners of a city that has become metropolitan."

To today's sportsman, however, the Minnesota of 100 years ago seems a hunters' paradise. Caribou herds roamed the northern counties and moose were common from Brainerd to the Canadian border. Deer and black bear flourished in the entire state.

Beaver, fox, mink, and other small furbearers were numerous and widely distributed.

Ducks, geese, and snipe were slaughtered by the thousands

both spring and fall. Succulent passenger pigeons and sandhill cranes (both now extinct), plover, partridge, and grouse were abundant throughout the state. (Only the ring-necked pheasant was absent; he had not yet been introduced to the state.

Hunters travelled by horse and buggy or used a wagon for more room. Some of the wealthier hunters kept complete wagon outfits ready to be driven off or loaded onto boxcars for long trips.

All the railroad lines had special coaches called "business cars" which were outfitted like today's campers and run over the lines to any point desired. Some hunters even rented handcars to take them where they wanted to go.

The Northern Pacific from Brainerd west was one of the favorite routes. At Brainerd trains rested over Sunday, and there, accord-

ing to Forest and Stream Magazine, "Colonel Weed's Head Quarters Hotel abounded with well-heeled gentlemen-sportsmen, their dogs, and retinues of servants."

The classiest hunters to hit the area were a group from Worcester, Mass, who came to Brainerd every year from 1875 to 1878 to hunt upland game birds.

The NP furnished them with at first one, then two specially outfitted cars. In 1878 they arrived with their own car, "The City of Worcester."

There was a reading room, grand drawing room and dining room, 12 double berths, great amounts of storage space in and under the car, washrooms, a butler's pantry and china closet, a complete kitchen, silver-plated oil lamps, and two French plateglass mirrors with embossed borders. (Who said Winnebago are fancy?)

The Crow Wing County Historical Society (CWHS), headquartered in its Museum in the Court House in Brainerd, is a non-profit organization chartered in 1927 for the purpose of "gathering, interpreting, and disseminating" the history of the county.
 REGULAR YEARLY MEMBERSHIP: \$1.00 LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$25.00-
 PATRON: over \$25.00

HUNTING HERE 150 YEARS AGO...The above article was printed in our 1972 newsletter. Nearly fifty years later, its subject is still interesting. It demonstrates how things have changed in our ecosystem and our transportation. These train cars were the private jets of today. Something else that has changed are our membership dues. In the bottom corner, you will see a regular yearly membership was \$1.00. Unfortunately, today one dollar would not go far in the purchasing of much needed archival, office, and exhibit supplies. Membership dues are so important to everything the Society is able to accomplish. We are so thankful for those of you who have continued your membership through this time when the benefits have been limited by our closure.

WHIZ-BANG



On May 26, 1923, four women from Brainerd set out on an adventure by automobile from Brainerd, Minnesota to San Diego, California: Lydia McKay, Hildegard Erstad, Thora Ingebridson, and Dagny Ingebridson. The Ingebridson sisters wanted to be present at the birth of their brother's child. Tuberculosis had confined the brother to a sanitarium and his lonesome wife wanted the company of his sisters. Thora was a nurse and Dagny was in nurses training. Friend and fellow Red Cross volunteer, Lydia McKay, was the main financier of the trip. She was married and much older than the others. Hildegard Erstad was a friend with relatives to visit along the way.

The vehicle, a used Starr that they nicknamed "Whiz-bang," was purchased specifically for the trip with help from Lydia's husband. It was a typical great road trip of the 1920s with sightseeing, picnics, and stops for repairs. Many of their nights were spent camping under a tarp that extended from the roof of the car. They otherwise stayed with friends and relatives.

Lydia McKay kept a log of the trip expenses that is now housed in the Crow Wing County Historical Society Archives along with dozens of photographs of the trip with notations on the back. There are images of roadside sellers, tourist sites, shenanigans, and the women always wearing their kerchiefs and men's attire. There are photos of people they visited along the way, even an "accidental meeting" with two other women from Brainerd traveling through Montana. They took multiple photos of Native Americans with notes on the back stating they had paid them to take their photos.

The women were away from home for nearly two months. This was not a concern for the younger single women, but for Lydia McKay, a wife and mother of four, it was momentous. Lydia left her daughter's Mabel (age 15) and Hortense (age 13) in charge of keeping house for their father and two brothers.

Lydia McKay's example along with these other strong, caring female role models led to a future courageous nurse—Hortense McKay. Hortense was set on a path of caretaking and strong bold womanhood that propelled her to survive the Philippines during WWII and become a Lieutenant Colonel at a time when women were new to the military. Look for a new exhibit featuring Hortense when the museum opens.



Along with their male attire, they acquired nicknames like Mac and Don. Notation on back of photo: "Our steak in Arizona. Taken out of Flagstaff, Arizona Mac, Hildie, Don"

Without our major fundraiser for the year, we cannot be more thankful for the outpouring of donations we received from the following generous individuals.

We thank you!

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Long Lake
Nokay Lake
Oak Lawn
Platte Lake
Roosevelt
St. Mathias

Thank You!



Notation on back of photo: "Men remove your hats when entering this church, Women in male attire barred." Church at Isletta New Mexico, Typical Indian village, Don standing as close as she dared with her male attire."

320 Laurel Street | P.O. Box 722 | Brainerd, MN 56401

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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)

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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 can also pay online using PayPal.

**WELCOME
NEW MEMBERS**

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Christopher & Carri Barks

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS
James Cummings
Rodger Paulson
Paul Roth



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