

THE COUNTY CHRONICLER

Polk County Historical Society

Volume #1 Issue 5

July

2003

Annual Potluck Picnic

At The Lion's Club Park

Located on the beautiful St. Croix River,
just north of St. Croix Falls.

The potluck will be at 6 pm – July 22

**Dale Cox from the National Park
Service will be our guest speaker with
River Poetry.**

All Historical Societies in the county
Are invited to join us.

Bring a dish to pass and your own
Utensils.



I apologize for errors in past newsletters. The June letter listed Todd and Tim Pfeifer as St. Croix High School students. They are the adult sons of our member, Murial Pfeifer. Students from the St. Croix High School also helped with the Little Red Schoolhouse painting project. The Little Red School House looks wonderful and will be transformed into a working school for the fair and the 150th Birthday.



LeRoy
Schwan-
See page 2

LeRoy has
Published his
Memoirs
and two
Books of
Poems.

They are
Available
At the
Museum.

CURATOR REPORT:

Evie Porter, Amery has loaned us an 1856 Belgian lace, mutton sleeve wedding dress worn by her great-great aunt. This might be on display at the 150th birthday bash.

We have also received some very good glassware and china.

Our museum has an excellent display in our **Toy Room**, but we still have a wish list.

In the 1950's every boy and girl had a cap-gun and holster set. The boys usually sported a double and the girls had to be content with a single.

We need a gun and holster set for our toy room!

Our train area has two **trains** on display, a Lionel -027 and a HO size. These trains are on loan and the owner would like them returned. We'd like to replace them with permanent sets. Could you help?

LeRoy B. Schwan

LeRoy Schwan is the Polk County Historical Society's "in house" artist and we are very thankful for his help through the years. LeRoy is best known for his drawings of local buildings of interests: churches, schools, farms and homes. He has donated over 150 of these prints to the historical society. He has also been a great help by making the labels that we use on exhibits.

LeRoy was born to Dorothy Papenfuss in 1932. The Papenfuss family was LeRoy's home for the first nine years of his life. In 1941, LeRoy's mother, Dorothy married Joseph Schwan and LeRoy joined his mother and new dad on the Schwan farm in Farmington Township, Polk County, WI. LeRoy helped with the farm chores until April of 1946 when his dad purchased the Farmington Cheese Factory and the family moved to the living quarters above the cheese factory. The factory was changed into a garage called "Schwan's Super Service". LeRoy lived with his family here from 1946 until his graduation from high school. LeRoy described the convinces of the factory; "We had no biffy. However we did have a shower downstairs in what had been the boiler room. I made the shower walls out of the wooden crate our 1946 Wards refrigerator came in. The water ran into the back yard, as did mother's laundry water. We used the shower every summer, otherwise I showered at school during the sports season."

In LeRoy's recent book, he sums his life as following: "My mother and dad loved each other and anyone could see by the many ways it was shown that they did. They disagreed on some things but I always saw them come to an agreement soon after. I had a great deal of freedom to choose when I was a teenager, including whether or not to go to high school. I took the subjects I wanted, studied what I thought was important and was never criticized for grades I brought home. My parents never gossiped about anyone. They would mention the problems people had, but never made judgments about them."

We have appreciated LeRoy's wisdom in our board meetings through the years. He is a retired teacher/professor of art education. He taught in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan, and Illinois. His students ranged from pre-school and mentally handicapped to junior and senior high school students, as well as graduate and undergraduate students. He is the author of a design test, and art activity book and two poetry books.

**"MUSIC,
ARTISTS &
REFRESHMENTS
ON THE
MUSEUM LAWN"**

Bring a friend or family
to enjoy the relaxed
atmosphere on the
lawn of the museum.

July 26 features:

The Beacrofts in
"The Fiddler's Corner"

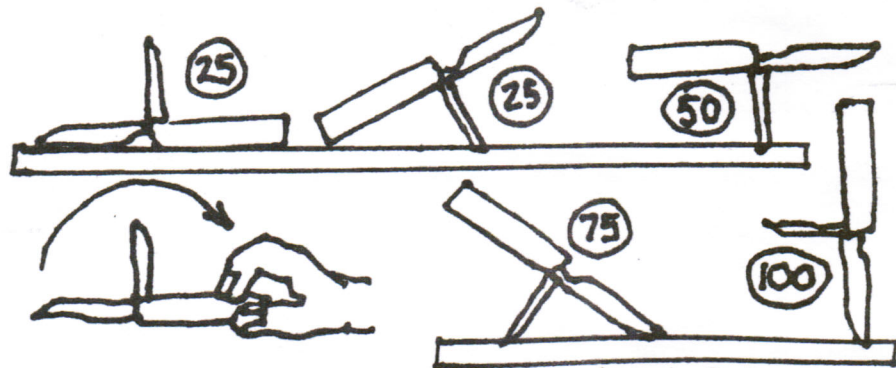
-Jane Dettman -

Painting on cake
pans

This is an unusual art
that makes great
gifts.

LeRoy

Remembers



side view of board

Position of Knife & points earned.

The game of "mumbley peg"

"Some days at recess we played 'mumbley peg'. All the boys had jack knives and it was a game played outdoors on a board. Each person took a turn flipping the knife. The knife had the large blade straight out and the smaller blade was half out (two blades open). You stood over the board and flipped the knife toward yourself. By positioning the hinged blade at different angles you scored different points. The scoring was by 25 point units so we learned to count by 25. The first person to get 500 points won. We took turns spinning the knife. The blades had to stick in the board."

"LeRoy Remembers" by LeRoy B. Schwan, page 23 & 24



THE OSCEOLA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Osceola Historical Society was organized in 1985 by a group of people who recognized the need to preserve and safeguard Osceola's rich heritage for future citizens. A sizable bequest in the will of Emily Olson, one of the founding members, enabled the Society to acquire the Andrew Jackson Clark house at 408 River Street for its headquarters and the Osceola Depot.

The Society has been instrumental in the restoration of the downtown storefronts and has worked with the Osceola Business Association in the publication of a historical walking tour guide.

A microfilm reader has been purchased and is available at the Osceola Public Library to assist citizens in genealogical research. The ongoing project of videotaping oral histories of residents was started in 1990.

The Osceola Historical Society offers history oriented programs at their monthly meetings, October through June. The public is welcome to attend. The 2003 officers are: President: Dr. John Simonstad, Vice President: Larry Kytola, Secretary: Linda Jensen Gordon, Treasurer: Lisa Pedrys.



OSCEOLA SOO LINE DEPOT

Trains have been passing in front of an Osceola Depot since 1887. In 1996, after being closed for 35 years, the depot reopened the doors for passengers to purchase their train tickets for either Marine on St. Croix, MN or Dresser, WI. The Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway is part of the Minnesota Transportation Museum.

Birthday Parties, Charter Trains, Memberships and

Volunteer Opportunities are available. Call 715-755-3570 for further details or visit our web site at www.mtmuseum.org.

Merchandise and Gift Items

are available year round. Visit the Jackson Street Roundhouse at 193 East Pennsylvania Avenue in St. Paul on Saturdays or Sundays or call for an appointment at the Osceola Depot to purchase those train related gift items for your railroad enthusiast.

Donations are Welcomed

The Minnesota Transportation Museum is a 501 (c) (3) tax-deductible educational organization. Dollars donated can be earmarked for restoration of any of the pieces of historic railroad equipment, for general operations or for the **GEAR** program.

The Give 'em a Ride (**GEAR**) program is a program to allow underprivileged youth and seniors to ride the train free of charge. Your contribution is fully tax deductible and appreciated. Just think of the historic and educational memories you will be creating.

Gift Certificates Available

Looking for a gift, for that hard to buy for person. Gift certificates are available for purchase. The Dinner trains and Mothers Day Brunch are always a sell out so make sure and purchase your tickets early. Call 715-755-3570 for more information or to make your purchase. Leave a message if no one answers and someone will get back to you. On-line ticketing will be available during the 2003 operating season, check out the website for more details.

Barn Again

August 15- September 21, 2003
A traveling Smithsonian Exhibit celebrating an American Icon; the barn on the family farm.
In the heart of America's Dairyland, barns stand as monuments to our agrarian heritage. For more information; Call 715-294-2787 or visit the website at www.wisconsinhumanities.org

Other things to see and do in the St. Croix River Valley.

- Cascade Falls
- St. Croix National Scenic Riverway
- Interstate Park in MN & WI
- Franconia Sculpture Park
- Fawn-doe-Rose, animal park
- Live theatre
- Hike or bike
- Relax, dine and stay awhile.

2003 Train Ride Schedule



**Osceola & St.
Croix Valley
Railway**

A division of the Minnesota
Transportation Museum
**114 Depot Rd.
Osceola, WI 54020**

Tel: 1-715-755-3570
1-800-711-2590
1-651-228-0263
www.mtmuseum.org
www.trainride.org

2003 OPERATING Schedule

Mother's Day BRUNCH TRAIN

May 11 10:00 am or 2:00 pm

Adults \$45, Children \$35

Dinner Trains Pizza Trains

June 14 & 28 June 14 & 28

July 12 & 26 July 12 & 26

August 9 & 23 August 9 & 23

September 13 September 13

6:00 PM 6:00 PM

\$45 each Adults \$20

Children \$10

Osceola Adventure Package

May 10 & 11 or June 14 & 15

Treat mom or dad to a weekend away. Have dinner at Adventures Restaurant on Saturday evening, stay over night at the River Valley Inn & Suites and have Sunday morning Brunch on the Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway.

Call for more details. 715-294-4060

National Park Ranger Guided Trips

Ride with a National Park Ranger, Saturdays June through August on the 2:30 Marine trip.

No additional charge

2003 Regular Schedule

May 24 through October 28, 2003

Saturdays, Sundays & Holidays

Osceola, WI to Marine on St. Croix, MN

11:00 am & 2:30 pm

90 minute, 20-mile round trip

Adults \$14, Seniors \$12, Children \$7, Family \$38

Osceola, WI to Dresser, WI

1:00 PM

Adults \$10, Seniors \$9, Children \$5, Family \$25

Seniors = 62 years of age or older

Children 4 and under ride free with paid adult

Family = 2 adults and 2-5 children ages 5-15 years.

First Class Service

Full First Class Service, with hors d'oeuvres and a beverage aboard the A-11 open platform observation car.

September 27 & 28

October 4, 5, 11 & 12

\$30 each

First Class Up-Grade

Snacks & Beverage on the A-11 open platform observation car.

June 14 & 28

July 12 & 26

August 9 & 23

September 13

\$20 each

Pumpkin Train

Saturday October 25

Decorated cars, story telling and Halloween treats to all children 5-15 years of age, after the train ride. Price of all tickets increased \$2 on this day.

Dinner & Movie Night

June 27 or July 25

Friday evening 7:00 PM

Laurel & Hardy silent movies and dinner aboard the A-11 open platform business car.

\$45 each

Sunday Morning Brunch Trains

June 1 & 15

July 6 & 20

August 3 & 17

September 7 & 21

10:00 am

Adults \$45 and Children \$30

Osceola, WI to Witthrow, MN

2 1/2 hour relaxing round trip train ride through the St. Croix River Valley on to Witthrow, Minnesota and back to Osceola.

What a grand way to spend a Sunday morning!

Osceola & St. Croix Valley Railway

A division of the Minnesota
Transportation Museum

114 Depot Road

PO Box 176

Osceola, WI 54020

Phone: 715-755-3570, 1-651-228-0263, or
1-800-711-2591

Fax: 715-294-3330

Email: oscvtrwy@centurytel.net

www.mntrainsmusem.org or www.trainride.org

THE EMILY OLSON HOUSE 408 RIVER STREET

The Emily Olson house owned and operated by the Osceola Historical Society is one of the oldest houses in Osceola. Built in 1862 by Andrew Jackson Clark for his bride, Emily, the house has been occupied by members of the Clark family and its descendants continually over 100 years



From the Polk County Historical Society's President's Desk

Wow, is all I can say about our June 13th bus tour to Clear Lake. It was a wonderful history lesson of the past. It all seemed to come alive, the huge timbers, the cranberry bogs, the large bodies of water, and the "once a upon time" towns.

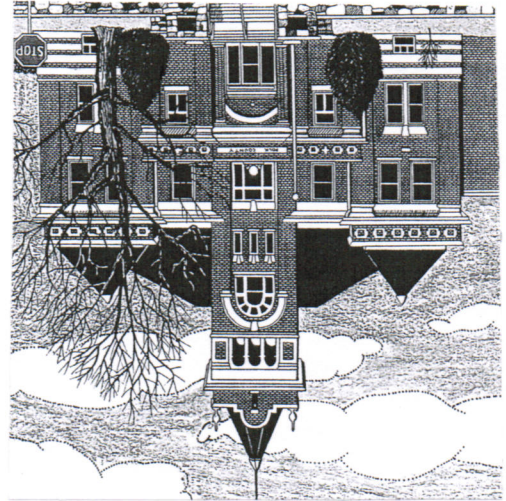
We are closing in on August 23rd, the celebration of Polk County's 150th birthday. The past history of Polk County will be retold at the St. Croix Falls Fair Grounds, with quilters, weavers, and storytellers. Historical societies will be displaying artifacts and authors will be signing books. A directory of Polk County's 150 will be available. Help us make this a proud and successful day for the past, present and generations.

We are limping along on our museum budget for 2003, the cut from the county is definitely noticeable.

Music on the Lawn will be July 26th, the fourth Saturday of the month. Come by and enjoy the music with us.

Memorials were received for Rev. Fransen and Bill Hansen.

President, Rosalie



POLK COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
BOX 1
BALSAM LAKE, WI 54810

Polk County Museum - Balsam Lake
Every afternoon Memorial Day through Labor Day
 Admission Adult \$3 Family \$5

Polk County Historical Society meets the 4th Tuesday of the month,
 usually at the Polk County Center Building, Balsam Lake.
 Membership Annual \$25 Life \$100

The 2003 Officers are:

President: Rosalie Kittleson 483-3979
 Vice President: Ralph La Duke
 Treasurer: Ted Zinn
 Secretary: Patty Young
 Newsletter: Judy Wester
 Liaison to County: Darrell Kittleson
 Director: Rosalie Kittleson
 Polk County 150th Birthday Chairman:
 Darrell Kittleson

