



Old Town Hall Museum

# Price County Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 40 No. 1 Spring 2022



Greenfield School Museum

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Newsletter Editor: John Berg

## Welcome to Another Season of History with the Price County Historical Society, Inc.

By: John L. Berg

As we navigate Wisconsin's version of spring weather, I am reminded of past accounts in the newspapers and personal recollections where snow was slow to retreat and temperatures remained chilly at best. However, the season seems to be changing and summer cannot be far behind, which means your Price County Historical Society (PCHS) will soon open the doors to the Old Town Hall and Greenfield School Museums in Fifiel! This season looks to be another promising one for our visitors and members! Our "other" significant activity is the planning and construction of the Louis A. Koenig Research Center, which will be built next to



Corner Connection, Phillips, presents a \$914 check to PCHS Board Members from a meat raffle fundraiser for the Louis A Koenig Research Center. L-R Etola Foytek, President, Lori and Peter Van Galder with grandson Damien Lowe and Bonnie Salm.

\$46,500. A fund drive started in December, 2021 with a goal to raise \$80,000, (although more will be needed) is still underway. Donations to this recent fund drive have so far brought us to \$62,000 of our \$80,000 goal. We had an anonymous donor put forth \$5000 towards a matching fund drive - and because of each of YOU and others interested in the success of this project, we met our goal and exceeded it by another \$9,375 dollars!!! Local response by PCHS membership, as well as some businesses and fraternal organizations have been very encouraging. Look for more fundraising events throughout the summer and fall as we continue our efforts to secure the necessary funds to see this project through to a high quality finish.



Wheel Way Auto, Fifiel, presents a \$800 check to PCHS for the Louis A. Koenig Research Center. Back Row L-R Tony Hill, Jim Koenig Co-Owner, Pete Skidmore Owner, Ken Broholm Front Row PCHS Board Members L-R Tom Kaiser, Etola Foytek, Bonnie Salm, Peter Dahlie

As may be expected, the main obstacle to our success is securing the necessary building materials at reasonable costs and in the time needed to begin construction. The Board of Directors has secured the services of Dennis Huotari of Huotari Construction of Medford, Wisconsin, as the general contractor to build the project. Dennis is well known and very highly regarded throughout the area as a man who is experienced and skilled in his profession, and whose crews perform excellent

the white cold storage building on Pine Street. As of May, 2022, PCHS has received approximately 85 percent of the total funds it estimates will be needed to complete the building (not including furnishings), leaving us a shortfall of approximately

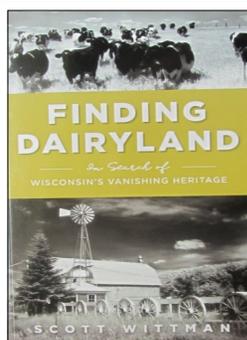
work. We are very fortunate to have secured his commitment to our project. As of this writing Board members Tom Kaiser and Len Schmidt have been consulting with Dennis regarding the building design and estimates are being worked out.

The original idea is to have a structure that will securely house the paper-based artifacts in the PCHS collection. Our collection consists primarily of an estimated 5,000 photographs, both actual and original as well as digital, dozens of original [and reproduced from original] maps, original plat books, diaries, family histories and about two thirds of original bound copies of the Phillips TIMES from 1879 through 1930, original copies of the Phillips Bee from the 1940s through the 1970s, and other newspapers, books and related

volumes. This collection merits a climate-controlled “fortress” as fire-resistant and weather resistant as possible, to preserve the collection and provide access to the archives for private and professional research. To that end we are planning for approximately 1400 square feet in a cement block structure faced with brick on the exterior, having a steel roof, soffits and fascia with secure steel doors. The interior will have rooms for HVAC and restroom facilities and the remainder will be open. This open space will be finished with drywall and flooring and will allow the staff to configure the interior in a manner best suited for research, storage, meetings and administrative functions. We eagerly anticipate the construction of this structure this year!

### Finding Dairyland by: Scott Wittman

Late last month a new book with Price County connections was published. *Finding Dairyland: In Search of Wisconsin's Vanishing Heritage*, by professional photographer and historian Scott Wittman, chronicles his search to discover the story behind the changing landscape of Wisconsin's family dairy farms. As he writes on the broadside: *“Explore America's Dairyland and the American Spirit. At the dawn of World War II, Wisconsin was home to nearly 200,000 dairy farms. Today barely 6,000 remain. The ghosts of the missing can still be seen in withering old farms along lonely highways—some restored, many abandoned or decayed, but always with a story to tell. Immigrants dreamed of owning their own farms, only to be fleeced by promotion of ‘cutover’ lands in the North woods. Freed men and women arrived in southwestern Wisconsin and became farmers and renowned barn-builders in one of the earliest integrated communities in the nation. Through hundreds of hours of site visits, interviews and*



*research, historian and photographer Scott Wittman extracts the forgotten truths from legend to tell the real stories of those who created the Dairy State.”*

Scott has attempted to put some real people into the context of a rapidly changing

rural landscape in what is still known as America's Dairyland. Price County's own Sherb Mabie along with Dennis and Bev Brayton, Alan Larson and Bruce Koch are featured in the accounts of north woods dairying. Published by the History Press, [Charleston, South Carolina] Finding Dairyland is available for \$21.99 through the publisher at [www.historypress.com](http://www.historypress.com), or through Amazon. I purchased a copy and have read it through twice. Scott has an engaging style of writing and his photographs compliment the insightful text, making this a book well worth the price.

PCHS is actively seeking direct donations of documents, photographs, diaries, plat books, and related materials pertaining to the history of Price County and surrounding counties. If you don't want to part with your historically significant artifact[s] the Society has the means to scan and digitize them either by a visit to your home with our portable equipment or another location such as meeting with you at the Public Library. We will request to accession it as part of the collection as a “digital accession.” We will fill out a Donation Form and specify the donation as an electronically digitized artifact accession. We also ask the donor to give the Society permission to publish the image[s] or document[s], as well as give permission to bonafide and credentialed researchers who demonstrate appropriate research, permission to publish the image of the photograph or documents.

## **A Day Out With the Price County Historical Society**

**By: John L. Berg**

Last April, Jim Bokern, President of the Manitowish Waters Area Historical Society, initiated a cooperative effort involving himself, Kay Krans, and myself to examine and discuss several historical sites in the Manitowish Waters area that he and Kay have been researching. Late April was chosen because much of the snow has retreated, the foliage has not budded out, and the weeds and grass are matted down, allowing a clearer view of sites, remains of structures, and viewing across vistas to gain a clearer visual perception of the surrounding area. Jim and Kay are interested in unearthing the early history of the upper reaches of the North Fork of the Flambeau River from Park Falls all the way east to its sources in the lakes and wetlands east of Manitowish Waters. Jim is promoting an informal gathering to discuss, research, and share information from each of our historical societies in an effort to develop a comprehensive perspective and understanding of the Flambeau River watershed.

From that day out, our discussions formed our belief that the Manitowish Waters Historical Society, the George Brown Ojibwe Museum & Cultural Center, and the Price County Historical Society, each has an integrated interest in researching and interpreting the history of the Flambeau River watershed. Our desire is to coordinate the research, and interpretation of the history of the Upper Flambeau Watershed from the initial arrival of the Anishinaabe Ojibwe in the mid-1740s through the various eras to the present time.

With that in mind, I sent out emails to Teresa Mitchell, director of the George Brown Ojibwe Museum & Cultural Center, to Cindi Stiles, former archeologist for the Lac du Flambeau band, and to Jim Bokern and Kay and Jeff Krans of the Manitowish Waters Area Historical Society inviting everyone to a day out at our cabin on the south shore of Round Lake on the Pike Lake Chain. This day would include an initial discussion of the mission of each of our agencies, our topics of interest in research, and how we may work with each other to share information and interpretation of our research. My wife Louise and I planned to host providing muffins, fruit, and coffee and tea for morning refreshment. Then the plan was to pile in my van for a driving/walking tour of historic sites around the Pike Lake Chain, to include the site of the summer camp of the Ojibwe from Waswaagoning at the thoroughfare between Pike and Round Lakes, Moose Jaw Lodge, the Round Lake Logging Dam and Doering "camp," and the Fishtrap Rapids site, as well as a Passports in Time Archeological dig from the mid 1990s at Fish-

trap. I planned to provide maps from the first official survey of 1865, then the 1880s, 1890s and 1900s. Afterwards we would gather back at the cabin for a dinner, which my wife Louise graciously agreed to prepare.

As things go, schedules didn't work out, and we hosted two sessions, both of which were absolutely wonderful! On Friday, April 8, in the excellent company of Teresa and Cindi at our cabin on Round Lake. We shared perspectives, had honest, meaningful discussions and learned much. Louise has seen the sights and patiently listened to me talk about them time and again, so Teresa, Cindi, and I piled into the van and drove to the site of AhMous's village at the thoroughfare between Pike and Round Lakes, and then braved the strong winds and snow to hike the trails around the Round Lake Logging Dam. We were well chilled by the time we got back to the cabin and enjoyed hot home made soup and batter bread sandwiches Louise had prepared. Unfortunately daylight passed and it was time for Teresa and Cindi to return home. However, Louise and I THOROUGHLY ENJOYED a GREAT DAY with Teresa and Cindi on Day One of A Day Out With the Price County Historical Society, Inc. !! Then on Saturday, April 30, 2022, Louise and I just enjoyed another GREAT DAY OUT IN THE EXCELLENT COMPANY OF Jim, Kay, and Jeff at our cabin on the south shore of Round Lake. We spent time just as Teresa and Cindi did a couple weeks earlier, getting to know each other and then delving into our various historical interests and projects. When Teresa and Cindi visited, our day was a wintry mix of sleet, snow, cold temperatures and wind. When Jim, Jeff and Kay visited, the temperature was a few degrees warmer so instead of sleet and snow, we had rain and wind. Still cold, but as we did on April 8 we got out and hiked around. Louise put together another of her famous soups and that batter bread, and Kay served up a blueberry pie for dessert.

My ultimate goal is to get us all together on the same day to discuss our insights and projects, as well as do a tour on the lakes for a different perspective from our land tour. Right now we're hoping to all gather at our cabin on August 13 for another great day out. May I again express the complete joy Louise and I experienced by having Teresa, Cindi, Jim, Jeff and Kay visit us to spend a day getting to know each other and talking history!!! This informal gathering is an important means of sharing our concerns, research, interests, perspectives and information as we seek to develop a contextual, comprehensive history of the Flambeau River watersheds. Louise and I look forward to continuing the discussions!!!

## AHMOUS, THE LITTLE BEE

Written and researched by John L. Berg

1740's—Present  
Anishinaabe Ojibwe settle at Waswaagoning  
(Lac du Flambeau)

The origin story of the Anishinaabe Ojibwe places them as the original people in the Lake Superior watersheds. After their ancient migration to the east, neighboring nations, the Menomini, the Ho Chunk, and the Mdewakanton Isanti Dakota, established a presence in these water-rich lands. It was the Isanti Dakota who became the most pervasive hunters of the Chippewa River watershed. The middle of the 17th century saw the return migration of the Anishinaabe Ojibwe to the south shore of Lake Superior, establishing a settlement on Madeline Island. From there they ranged throughout the forests south of the lake, warring with the Isanti for dominance in the rich hunting lands for well over a century. By the mid-1740's the Ojibwe, led by Kiischkiimun [Sharpened Stone], ranged throughout the Chippewa River watershed hunting, fishing, harvesting wild rice, and making maple sugar. For well over a century, the Ojibwe dispersed in smaller family-based groups and some settled at Waswaagoning, now known as Lac du Flambeau, as well as along the shores of lakes in the Flambeau River headwaters. Kiischkiimun's son Waabiski Gaagaagii [White Raven] succeeded his father as chief leader of the inland Ojibwe bands including those of Waswaagoning. Upon Waabiski Gaagaagii's death in 1847, his son AhMous [Little Bee] was recognized as the unquestioned chief leader in the councils of the Ojibwe at Waswaagoning and indeed throughout the Chippewa and Flambeau River watershed. Although the 1854 treaty imposed reserved lands for the Ojibwe at Waswaagoning which the government recognized as Lac du Flambeau, it is not remembered in what year AhMous moved his family group to the thoroughfare between Pike and Round Lakes. However, between December 15, 1864 and August 5, 1865, Deputy Surveyor Alexander Anderson recorded in his field book: "*The Chief of the de Flambeau band of Chippewa Indians has his County Seat between the lakes in the southern part of Section 26. The southern one should be called after him, viz., Armoose Lake. He has a garden of 2 or three acres in potatoes and other vegetables.*" Prior treaties imposed by the United States government in 1837 and 1842 recognized and affirmed the rights of the Ojibwe to hunt, fish, and gather resources in the ceded territories. These traditional practices continued throughout



Former site of AhMous's village at Thoroughfare between Round & Pike Lakes, Town of Fifiield, Price County, WI  
Photograph taken by John L. Berg.

the ceded territories during the 19th and early 20th century, are alive and well in the 21st century.

William Warren, recognized as a primary historian of the Ojibwe people, wrote in 1852: *Kiischkiimun was not only chief by hereditary descent, but he made himself truly such through the wisdom and firmness of his conduct both to his people and the whites. During his lifetime he possessed an unbounded influence over the division of his tribe with whom he resided and generally over the Lake Superior bands and villages... Waabiski Gaagaagii [White Raven], the son and successor of Kiischkiimun fully sustained the influence of his deceased father over the inland bands till his death in 1847. His son, Ahmous (the Little Bee), though lacking the firmness, energy and noble appearance of his fathers, and though their formerly concentrated bands are now split up by the policies of traders and United States agents into numerous small factions headed by new up-start chiefs, yet virtually in the estimation of his tribe, he holds the first rank over the Lac du Flambeau and Chippeway River division, and his right to a first rank in the councils of his people is unquestioned...*

It was AhMous's son Skye who captured a bald eagle and sold it to a trader. Named "Old Abe," the eagle gained enduring fame as the mascot of the Wisconsin Iron Brigade during the Civil War.

How long AhMous and his kin resided at the thoroughfare between Pike and Round Lakes is not known. In the 1860s he and a delegation of Ojibwe leaders from Wisconsin and Minnesota traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with the President. Unfortunately, AhMous contacted a fatal illness and died there. He is buried in the Congressional Cemetery.

# Collection Operations and a Pleasant Day with Delia (Plyer) Pritzl

By: John L. Berg

On April 5 I met with Delia at her home out near the old mill town of Kaiser southwest of Park Falls. Delia graciously invited me to scan her family's photographs of the CCC camps her parents worked at as well as several related photographs of the wildlife of the area. Five hours later we wrapped up the session and PCHS was granted digital accession of her collection. I and PCHS want to thank you Delia, for your time, generosity and concern to insure preservation of these important historical photographs. This is but a sampling of an outstanding collection of a part of the history of Price County and what will eventually be available to historians and researchers accessing the Louis A. Koenig Research Center.



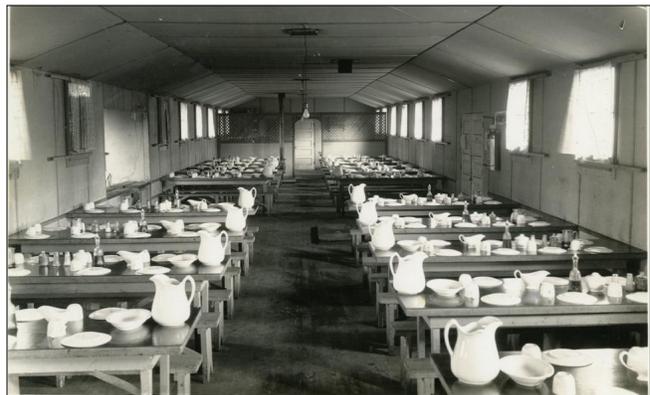
Archie Fleming on bulldozer of Forest Road #390 Flambeau District Chequamegon Nation Forest June 14, 1937. Delia [Plyer] Pritzl Collection.



Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Sheep Ranch Co. 644, F-4, A.E. Muttaugh, C.O. in 1933 or 1934 Delia [Plyer] Pritzl Collection.



Bunk House at Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Sheep Ranch Co. 644, F-4, A.E. Muttaugh, C.O. In 1933-34 Delia [Plyer] Pritzl Collection.



Mess Hall at Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Sheep Ranch Co. 644, F-4, A.E. Muttaugh, C.O. in 1933-1934. Delia [Plyer] Pritzl Collection.



Part of the large crew of young men assigned to Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Sheep Ranch Co. 644, F-4, A.E. Muttaugh, C.O. in 1933-34 Delia [Plyer] Pritzl Collection.



Another part of the large crew of young men assigned to Civilian Conservation Corps Camp Sheep Ranch Co. 644, F-4, A.E. Muttaugh, C.O. in 1933-1934. Delia [Plyer] Pritzl Collection.

Since COVID-19 put some of these operations on hold I was excited to be invited by Lud Miller to the September, 2021 meet and greet held at Northwoods Supper Club at the corner of Highways 70 and 13 in Fifield for the Fifield All School Reunion. It was an evening of reacquainting for those classmates who attended the school during their high school years, with the last high school class graduating in 1962 when the Fifield and Park Falls systems were consolidated, as well as those who attended during its subsequent years as an elementary school and junior high through 1979. I met and spent a very enjoyable evening visiting with many who are passionate about preserving the history of the school and its remaining relics, as well as those interested in the work we are doing to preserve the photographs and documents relating to Price County proper. One of these Fifield alumna is Delia [Plyer] Pritzl, whose parents John and Letha Plyer supervised the CCC camps at Skookum Valley in the Town of Emery and Riley Creek in the Town of Fifield. John and Letha also manned the fire towers at Elk River and Sentinel Point after the CCC camps closed.

As you can see by the photographs that Delia provided to us, this is truly a collaborative effort to recognize the historical value and then allow us the access to scan a collection such as this. This is a great example of working together to preserve and document the history of Price County.

After photographs are donated or scanned, the next step in the collections process begins. Whether in original or digital form, operations at the Louis A Koenig Research Center will include the continuing digitization of photographs into the Past-Perfect Program. This program provides comprehensive integration of photographs based on their caption information. For instance, let's say we have an original photograph of Prentice Wisconsin in 1923. As the caption is fleshed out with information about the streets, railroads, buildings, people, industries, businesses, private homes, churches and other scenery, this information is tagged to other photographs having "Prentice," "1923," or such names of businesses such as "blacksmith," "Livery," "hotel," and the like. And it works in the reverse. So if we look for a name such as Diamond, which is an early name associated with Prentice, we're going to get Prentice and all the entries with Prentice attached to it. From there we can expand our search as the tagged names appear on the screen, and chase the information and photographs in our collection that we seek. Pretty Cool, eh? Eric Tollefson, Traci Dunbar and Etola Foytek have

been working on these types of projects at our present Archives Room at BW Papersystems in Phillips. It requires extreme attention to detail to accession, catalog and cross-reference all of these photographs along with a knowledge of the software and a keen eye for detail to be able to digitally improve and sharpen the scanned images on some of the more faded photographs. After this step the original photographs are placed in archival folders in order to store them out of direct light, It is definitely painstaking work, but an extremely important part of the preservation of Price County history.

Going hand in hand with collection operations is our social media presence. Our website is managed by Eric Tollefson and our facebook page is managed by Steven Eitrem. This is yet another way to get our information out to the interested public. Our book sales have noticeably increased as we now have the means to offer purchase online. We're in the 21st century selling 19th and 20th century stories!

The PCHS Board has continued its regular monthly meetings and the Museums will open on the first weekend in June. This season we will sponsor openings from 11 am to 3 pm on both Saturday and Sunday. Carol Forward is working at the Greenfield School to get the building ready for opening and arranging hosts. Sally McFadyen, Peter Dahlie, Len Schmidt, Etola Foytek, Traci Dunbar and John Berg are working on cleaning up the Old Town Hall Museum. Tammy Lanham, one of our newest members, has graciously volunteered to take over caring for the flowerbeds on the grounds. Thank you Tammy! Etola Foytek and Therese Trojak have been busy contacting members to arrange for hosting on the weekends at the Old Town Hall Museum. If you would like to host, please contact us as we are always looking for more hosts.

Very sadly our friend, fellow board member, food event planner extraordinaire and chef bar none, Bonnie Salm experienced a medical event and thus has not been able to participate with us since April. We extend our best wishes to her as she works toward recovery.

So here we are on the cusp of another promising season at the museums in Fifield and the prospect of construction of the Louis A. Koenig Research Center. Speaking for the Board, I cheerfully invite each and every member to come on out and tour your museums and visit with the folks supervising the sites! You won't regret it! Hope to see you sometime this summer!

**Yearbooks Available at Greenfield School as of 05/21/22**

DUP means "Duplicate made from Copier"

YGC means "Yearbook is in Glass Case on North Wall"

P.F. is Park Falls

**Echo (Park Falls)**

1913 (DUP & YGC)

**The Torch (Park Falls)**

1922 (DUP & YGC)

1936 1995

1939 1996

1940 1997

1943 1999

1944 2000

1945 2002

1946 2004

1947 2007

1948 2008

1949 2009

1950 **Old Abe (Chequamegon-PF)**

1952 2010

1953

1954

1955

1956 1926 (DUP & YGC)

1957 1947

1958 1948

1959 1949

1960 1952

1961 1954

1963 1956

1964 1957

1965 1958

1966 1959

1968 1960

1969 1964

1970 1965

1971 1966

1972 1967

1973 1970

1974 1971

1975 1972

1977 1973

1978 1976

1981 1977

1982 1982

1985 1987

1989 2005

1991 2009

1992 2010

1993 2011

2012

**South Fork (Fifield)**

1929 (DUP & YGC & 1)

**Hilltop (Fifield)**

1939 (DUP & 1 original)

1948

1949

1950

1952

1953

1954

1955

1956

1957

1958

1959

1960—no yearbook published

1961

1962

**Wedge (Ashland)**

1954

**Kennan Elementary**

1989-90

1991-92

1992-93

1993-94

2001-02

**Catawba**

1989-90 (Gr. 5-8)

1993-94 (Gr. 5-8)

2002-03 (Gr. K-8)

As you can see we have some gaps in years and are looking to fill in the missing years to the greatest extent that we can. If you can help us out with any donations on these missing years, please contact us. The yearbooks are housed at the Greenfield School and are one of our more popular and used collections.

THE OLD TOWN HALL AND GREENFIELD SCHOOL MUSEUMS WILL BE OPEN SATURDAY AND SUNDAY THIS SUMMER FROM 11 AM TO 3 PM STARTING WITH THE FIRST FULL WEEKEND IN JUNE THROUGH LABOR DAY.

SPECIAL DATES , EVENTS AND FUNDRAISERS AT THE MUSEUMS THIS SUMMER FROM 11 AM TO 3 PM: ALL PROCEEDS WILL GO TO THE BUILDING OF THE LOUIS A. KOENIG RESEARCH CENTER.

JUNE 25: PIE SOCIAL

AUGUST 13: STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

YES, I WISH TO MAKE A DONATION IN THE AMOUNT OF \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
FOR THE LOUIS A. KOENIG RESEARCH CENTER.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

For a donation of \$150.00 or more PER INDIVIDUAL I would like the recognition to read as follows on the

Donor Wall: \_\_\_\_\_