



The Pinery

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ANNUAL MEETING

The annual general session of our society will be held on the evening of Wednesday April 17, 1968. The Program Committee is planning a special program for the occasion. Marie Swallow is chairman of the committee.

The annual meeting marks the official close of the Society's fiscal year. Dues for 1968-69 year are due as of that date.

OTHER PLANS

In considering our tours program this year, a member of the Board reminded of our failure to see virtues close at home. It is proposed for the next tour (to be announced soon) that a bus swing be taken around the Portage County Parks. There are other motivations in this projected outing-picnic-tour. Our Society should be joining forces with the County Park Commission in linking historical associations with the county's scenic recreation attractions. Your society's board has also had under consideration the development of a bicycle and automobile historic-scenic trail for this area. Much of this must involve the park systems. One park under special focus just now is Jordan, where a registered marker is in prospect. A survey of the cemeteries over the county is a related idea (probably not as a part of the tour) but as an important factor in historical and geneological interest.

NOTES FROM RECENT BOARD SESSIONS

The highlights of the January and February Board meeting were the reports made by committees on three of the Society's

registered marker projects:

- (1) the Polish ethnic settlement at Polonia
- (2) the Jordan Park Power Plant
- (3) the first Portage County Court House at Plover

The committees concerned are aiming at a June 1968 deadline, working now at gathering the background materials and authentications.

Marie Swallow, chairman of the Polonia Marker Committee is laying the groundwork for this study, enlisting the aid of Adam Bartosz and Winifred Wysocki.

Roman Eickendorf is chairman of the Plover Court House Committee with George Sterling, that village's postmaster, assisting. This committee's work could lead to a state-wide marker since this court house of the territorial days served a region extending from the city of Portage to the upper reaches of Wisconsin.

Hamilton Viets, chairman of the Jordan Dam Marker Committee has made special progress towards this local marker, working with Paul Yambert and Had Manske, who are nearby residents at Jordan, and with Mr. Swoboda, Manager of the Public Service Corporation and James Hull who had done some initial study on this site for the Society two years ago. Mr. Viets, who is Supervisor for Ward 3, Stevens Point, is also conferring with members of the County Park Commission.

At the February session, Mrs. Win Rothman presented to the society a series of ribbon-badges as mementos of events important in Portage County's civic and social life. These included commemorative badges for the Old White School reunions of 1906, 1930, 1932; for the 50th Anniversary of the Stevens Point home-coming of 1908 and a

first premium ribbon for the Great District Fair, 1889. Mrs. Rothman also presented a manuscript dated August 5, 1871, a transaction paper detailing the land appraisal values for the right-of-way and depot grounds for the Wisconsin Central Railway.

Reported at the February session, the annual sale of 165 of the State Historical Society's Wisconsin Calendar netted a profit of \$53.75. The sale this year had very heavy competition from super-markets, magazine stands, from church, school and social organizations. The bulk of our Society's sale was made through the courtesy of the Public Library and the University Center Book Store.

Also reported: a considerable quantity of the Pioneer School commemorative stationery is available at \$1.00 each. Seventy-nine boxes have been sold to date.

PLOVER RIVER DAMS AND MILLS

The work of the Jordan Power Dam Marker Committee recalls the fact that predecessors to this mill up and down the stream were sawing lumber and milling feed and flour way back to the 1840's. The record indicates that one of the very earliest (if not the earliest) lumber mill in Northern Wisconsin was on this river. At the February session of the Board it was proposed that a local marker be established somewhere on the Plover to memorialize this.

The Society has prepared several items of background information on these dams and mills. A copy of this compilation is available to members on request.

AN INDIAN VILLAGE NEAR YELLOW-BANKS ON THE WISCONSIN

The records tell us that a village of historic Indians lived on the high banks overlooking the Wisconsin River, just below the Little Plover channel near Springville. A letter from a student of Wisconsin Indians asks for information on this local village. If members of the Society know of accounts or statements on local Indians in letters, journals, diaries, records of any kind or hear-say records, let the Society know. Remember that photo-duplication processes make it possible to make copies for study without injury to the original manuscript.

Members will recall that several years ago archeological diggings were conducted at the site under the direction of Prof. George Dixon, for the pre-historic Indians that had once lived there. Our correspondent's enquiry concerns an historic tribe that followed--probably Winnebago. The land now belongs to Mrs. Joseph Hartz. It is in the process of sub-division.

ALBERT H. SANFORD

A correspondent has also asked for information and material that would be helpful for a study on the life and works of Albert H. Sanford, particularly for the period that he was a resident of Stevens Point. Mr. Sanford was a member of the original Normal School faculty. Among the many distinguished writings of this historian is a contribution particularly pertinent to this region: "Polish People of Portage County". Wisconsin Historical Society Proceedings, 1907: 259-88.

"MAKE ME A CHILD AGAIN JUST FOR TONIGHT"

Sorting through some material of the Historical Society, in need of filing, I came across clippings and pictures of the old pioneer David S. McMillan family, early day Portage County lumberman in the town of Sharon, and of his wife, Harriet Barbour McMillan - "grandma McMillan" to me. My mind darted back to the time, more than 70 years ago when we lived across the street from each other. The McMillan home still stands at 1904 Pine Street, my girlhood home was at 702 Division Street (old numbering) now the 1900 block. This was the only house in the half block fronting on Division Street. Our cornfield along Center Street marked the southern boundary of my childhood visiting area, which extended along Pine to Wisconsin, along Wisconsin to Division and then sent me safely back home. Maybe the old pioneer families who lived in that small area might interest you, so I go back to "Grandma McMillan" again.

Our favorite visiting spot was on the side porch on the sunny south side of the

house. What we visited about I have no idea today, but still sharp in my memory is the taste of the peppermint and winter-green candies that came out of the right hand pocket of her black sateen apron.

South of "Grandma McMillan's" looking just as it did years ago, was the Kingsbury home. F.W. Kingsbury was born in Stevens Point, the son of Judge J. L. Kingsbury, and went to school in the little schoolhouse on the east edge of town, sometimes known as the Brown School. (I believe the land on which it was built was given by E. E. Brown) F.W.Kingsbury, in the middle 1890's served as Stevens Point Chief of Police. It was during this period of service and during one of my front porch visits that he slipped the handcuffs on me. The moments of suspense until they came off was memorable.

North of Grandma McMillan's the half block between Plover and Pine belonged to the John Week family. The first 100 feet to the north made a wonderful "Fox and Geese" ring in the winter time. Stamped out in the snow, size unlimited, the fun of both making and playing remains a happy memory. The Week home was a lovely dignified early 1880 structure, destroyed by fire not too many years ago.

Directly to the East from the Week home across Pine Street stands the house built by William Agnew, early day surveyor, who with John Slothower came into Portage County in the early 1850's. The Agnew family were prominent in the civic and social life of this small backwoods community and made it their home for almost 50 years. My memories of the old Agnew house--the property included the whole triangle--are more vivid after it became the home of President Pray. Theron B. Pray was the first President of the Stevens Point Normal School; a small man, quick in his movements and decisive. I believe his administration did much to direct the growth from Normal School to our present university.

Lastly, across Division Street to the east stood a white cottage. Here Frank Houston, river pilot, frontiersman, storekeeper was living his few remaining years with his daughter, Mrs. Mary Redfield.

I was always a bit afraid of him. Tall, white-haired, stern, little girls under ten were just underfoot, I imagine. In this little white cottage too, several years later, roomed a Normal student, destined to become nationally famous as the leading Child Psychologist in the United States. The name of Arnold Gesell was to become a household word. Today, the Gesell Institute of Child Psychology is a permanent entity on the Campus of Yale University.

So now we have "come a complete circle" and have gotten back home to 702 Division Street across from Grandma McMillan's. This, too, was a pleasant old house and had a history of many happy memories.

--Edith Burr Rothman
1-27-68

JORDAN ROAD

Sometimes just as the sun goes down
Come pleasant thoughts of long ago.
I hear the sleighs with lumber creak
Over the shining hard packed snow.

For oft this ghostly cavalcade
At sunset came from Jordan mills.
The boards soon to be cut and made
Into fine doors and window sills.

You hear the clear stacatto tones
No other like them on the air.
As nearer, nearer came the loads
Drawn by a frosty harnessed pair.

And now the steady rhythmic sounds
Stopped for a moment, then you knew
The sleigh had slipped, some obstacle
The foaming steed could not pull through.

But then the music came again.
And forward moved the frost gemmed load,
And would that I could hear once more
Those sounds on Jordan Road.

By - Katherine I. Dignum

Miss Dignum was a "long ago" resident of Stevens Point. The family home was on Main Street, now numbered 1808 and traffic from the Jordan Road all passed by her home.