

Official Publication of the Portage County Historical Society of Wisconsin

Remember When Radios Were of Such Value They Were Required to be Assessed and Taxed?

by Dave Simonis

The year was 1930 and Stevens Point residents were a bit upset as apparently individuals weren't taxed directly in the previous year or years. It was reported that the city had taken it upon itself to cover the expense (w/o mention or as an oversight one must assume). Now that local assessors were listing radio valuations by property, local residents felt they were being bilked – prompting a statement by the regional state district assessor. Here is the article of the time from the local paper, published 5/21/1930.

NO EXEMPTION THIS YEAR ON LOCAL RADIOS

"Galbraith Calls Attention to Requirement That They Be Assessed"

Radios in Stevens Point are being assessed at this time pursuant to special instructions from Alan Galbraith, Wisconsin Rapids, Assessor of Incomes for this district, and it will do no good for the owners of such sets to complain as the action is held to be strictly in conformity with state law.

Individual radio owners escaped paying last year on this form of personal property after being given the benefit of a doubt then existing as to whether statutes required such a benefit.

The local decision not to tax the individual owner (last year) was in error, Mr. Galbraith declared while in the city Tuesday afternoon on official business, and he said that Stevens Point is the only city in his district that had come to his attention where the law had been erroneously construed. The district comprises Portage, Wood and Clark counties.

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Society Events

Scarabocchio Art Museum
WWI display, Monday - Thursday now until March 18, 2018
Special Films: Thursday February 8, 15' 22. See President's Report for details.

Annual Meeting: April 18, 2018
at the Library's Pinery Room
starting at 6:30. Guest speaker:
Leslie Bellais: "Wisconsin: The
Traitor State"

Synagogue
Open Memorial Day to
Labor Day
Saturday & Sunday 1 - 4pm
By appointment 715-600-4930

Historic Fire House No. 2
Open Memorial Day to
Labor Day
Saturday & Sunday 1 - 4pm
By appointment 715-600-4930

Heritage Park
Open Memorial Day to
Labor Day
Saturday & Sunday 1 - 4pm
By appointment 715-600-4930

Rising Star Mill
Closed for the season.



President's Report

by Tim Siebert

The first year of the Society's Great War remembrance is over as the cold weather sets in. We will be taking the telling of this important story inside. On November 8th the Society opened a presentation at Scarabocchio Art Museum located just west of the square in the old Point Bakery building. The goal of the presentation is twofold. The first is to present the stories of a number of key people from Portage County that would play an important role in the Great War. Adm. Grant, Madame Ernestine Schumann-Heink, Gen. McGlachlin, Paul Collins, Carl Jacobs and Clayton Slack are all presented in panels telling of their contributions to the war effort. The second aspect of the presentation is to try to show the way in which the U.S. and Wisconsin, in particular, attempted to sell the war to the American Public. This is important in Wisconsin because we were seen by many from outside the state as the traitor state because of our German Heritage.

The presentation in Scarabocchio's takes two forms. They are movie posters and sheet music all trying to drive home the idea of patriotism and the importance of this conflict. The Society has also set up a series of three film showings at the museum. This is being done in conjunction with the LIFE class. The films and discussions of them will take place on three consecutive Thursdays in February (8th, 15th and 22nd). Each will begin at 5:00PM and involve a discussion of the topic and the film itself. We will be showing "The Bond" and "Shoulder Arms" (both with Charlie Chaplin) then "Sergeant York" and finally "Wings" (won the first Academy Award for Best Picture in 1929). The display will be open to the public Monday - Thursday now until March 10, 2018.

The Society's annual meeting will take place in on April 18th, 6:30 in the Pinery Room of the downtown library on Main Street. The guest speaker will be Leslie Bellais. Ms. Bellais is a curator at the Wisconsin Historical Society's museum in Madison. She will present a talk on "Wisconsin: The Traitor State." This will be the end of our winter look at this aspect of The Great War and begin the second season of our remembrance at Heritage Park.

As part of this remembrance the Society has published or reprinted a series of a dozen books dealing with this county's role in The Great War. Thanks to the efforts of Sue Koehl we have now been able to publish another volume. Ms. Koehl has put together a book on the role that Carl Jacobs played in the war. The book is based on letters Mr. Jacobs wrote home as he sat in the trenches in France. We would also like to thank the Sentry Insurance Foundation for financing the printing of 100 copies of this book and providing proof readers for the book. The volume is available for \$10 from the Society or at our bookstore in the Synagogue on Saturday afternoons until Christmas. Any of the Society's offerings can be ordered off line

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Over the last few years PCHS has received generous support, large and small amounts, from many sources. Listed here are just few of those donations.

Our Major Financial Supporters to Our General Funds 2016 - 2017

- Sentry Insurance
- Stevens Point Brewery
- UW-Stevens Point
- Laird Youth Leadership Foundation
- Okray Foundation
- Portage County
- City of Stevens Point
- Andrew Fickman
- Seramur Family
- Kiwanis
- Community Foundation - Arthur Heinz Charitable Fund
- Dallas 7 Edith Pankowski
- Tim Copps
- Stielstra Trust
- Robert Woehr
- Debra Schumer
- Robert Whitney
- Simonis Family
- Milo Harpsted
- Dennis Rocheleau
- Brittany Bitto

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The Pinery

The Pinery logo was definitely in use by April 1956 until at least 1984. A return to our "roots".



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The Pinery and the payment sent to PCHS, P.O. 672, Stevens Point, WI 54481.

The bookstore is to be open on each Saturday in November and December from noon to 4:00 and will be open whenever the Synagogue is open to the public. All of the Great War books are available as are nearly 100 other books and booklets that the society has published. I would like to take this opportunity to thank several people who have volunteered to give up their Saturdays to work in the bookstore-Janet Zblewski, Diane Lang, Dave Simonis, Beverly West, Sue Koehl and Jerry Rohlinger.

Architectural plans have been drawn up for the agricultural displays to be placed in the new barn. Plans have also been completed for the interior of the post office and doctor's office in Heritage Park. This project is part way completed in that the interior of much of the building has now been stripped of its previous coverings and will shortly be ready for rehabilitation. The major draw back for this project is funding. Our thanks to Mr. Jason Jones for his work both in making the drawings but also in doing a great deal of the work on both the barn and, to date, the post office.

This past fall the Society offered two talks to the general public. The first was, in fact, two talks by John Harry at the Stevens Point Brewery on the history of the brewery. The first talk was sold out quickly and a second talk was put together. The Society, thanks to Mr. Harry and the Brewery, was able to obtain the archives of the brewery dating back to prohibition. Unfortunately, the collection harbored a great deal of mold and is being treated by Duraclean to dry out some of the documents and clean up the mold. The estimated cost of this process is between \$400 and \$500. Any financial help would be greatly appreciated. A check for this project would need to have either the word mold or brewery in the memo portion of the check. Thank you for anything you can do to help. The second talk and walk was the "Murder On Main Street" walk done again this year by Mr. Erik McFarland. As with last year the talk was well attended. Our thanks to Mr. McFarland for his time and energy in putting this talk/walk together.

Along with the brewery collection the Society has been the recipient of a number of other gifts to our collection. A complete ledger and bill collection from Church's Plumbing (Janet Eschenbach), Framed photo of the 1st Baptist Church (South Wood County Historical Society), series of books, ag books and clothing (Sue Koehl), cast iron Christmas tree stand, crocheted items (Jim Abbrederis), and World War II nurse items (Rossier). A thanks to all of these donors.

We are still taking aluminum cans, Christmas tree lights and any types of cords or wires. They can be put next to the garbage cans on the south side of the Synagogue.

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Jason Jones
Feltz Lumber
Robert & EJ Galecki
Michael & Martha Galecki
Earl & Jenny Baeten

Our Major Financial Supporters to Our Barn Project 2014 - 2017

Sentry Insurance
Laird Youth Foundation
Community Foundation
SPASH FFA
Joshua & Jennifer Mou
Sermur Family Foundation
Carl Wohlbier Memorial
Soik Farms
Okray Foundation
Town of Plover
Delta Dental
Norm & Marie Worzalla
James & Delores Zakrzewski
Chris Okray
Gene & Nancy Kemmetter
Village of Plover
Mark & Karen Ilten
Phil Gjevre
Gale & Ruth Gordon
Herb Kohl Foundation
William & Teri Lynn Jenkins
David & Patti Becker
P. Feltz

Without these generous donations and the many more that space does not allow us to list here the Society could not function and much of Portage County's history would disappear and would be soon forgotten.

Thank You!

“Complaints Useless”

The two assessors of personal property here, Joseph A. Peck and A. Cuneen, are therefore, under Mr. Galbraith’s instruction, putting valuations upon all radios in the city and listing them for tax purposes. When Mr. Galbraith learned that a number of set owners complained that their radios should not be taxed. He immediately prepared a public statement citing the Wisconsin law and emphasizing that the both assessors have no choice in the matter but must evaluate radios.

Mr. Galbraith’s statement follows: “It has come to my attention that the question as to whether a radio should or should not be assessed is causing considerable discussion. I am taking this opportunity to explain the legal aspect of the subject.

“The Wisconsin statute requires the assessment of all personal property ‘not specifically exempted by such statutes’. While there may be arguments favorable to the exemption of radios from taxation, the fact still remains that the legislature has not seen fit to exempt such property. The assessor has no choice in the matter but must assess such radios. The local assessor cannot put himself in the position of violating his oath of office, which might bring about his removal, nor can he afford to perjure himself when he signs the affidavit which carries a severe penalty upon conviction. Therefore, do not blame the assessor for carrying out the duties laid upon him by the legislature and for following the instructions given him by the tax commission and the assessor of Incomes.”



“All Paid It Last Year”

“A tax on radios owned in Stevens Point last year was paid never-the-less, but it was paid by the city as a whole instead of by the individual set owners. When the county assessment was made “by the state” the radios were valued. This was only an estimate but it was added to the assessed valuation for state and county tax purposes. Therefore, the city as a whole including those who didn’t own radios and paid the radio tax.”



Awards received by a few of our members for their work in preserving Portage County History.

← Milo Harpstead

Jim Abbrederis
David Simonis →
Sue Koehl





Firehouse No. 2

by Dave Simonis, Curator

In September a security system that was approved by the BOD was installed by PerMar Security. It uses cellular communication to send alarm signals and protects entry points and also detects interior motion. A few more donations have come in from various sources including the Stevens Point Fire Department, and the addition of a large aerial photograph of the downtown Stevens Point area circa the 1950's. It is about 4 feet in width and 3 feet tall and looks at the downtown from the north – which is not the normal view from other aerials (usually shots from the south view).

The Firehouse was open during trick-or-treat hours this Halloween and handed out near 100 pieces of candy. Neighbors said the #'s were down – attributed to the weather which was cold.

The haymow has been cleaned up and is now being used for PCHS storage. Lighting has been partially updated and shelving built.

We are still looking for local past/historic outdoor business signs for the Stevens-Point/jail room décor. If you have a sign to donate see contact information below.

Items in need for the firehouse include: Rolls of standard paper towels for the bathroom, toilet paper for the bathroom, Swiffer sheets used to dust off fire truck and other surfaces, paint-brushes (general purpose 2" – 5" width), 4' LED shop-style lighting (3000 lumens minimum per fixture) for additional task-lighting in the haymow. We welcome donations of the above items or funds to purchase them. Call Dave Simonis at 715-341-8638 for information.

Heritage Park 2017

By Anton Anday, Curator

From January to March of 2017 the construction of Phase Two of the Farm Museum project was nearing completion at the Park, focusing on the barn display area. Floor, walls and lighting systems were installed by and under the supervision of Mr. James Abbrederis and Mr. Jason Jones. We had six months to complete this building project under our licensing agreements. Without the help of Milo Harpstead, T. Siebert, J. Abbrederis, J. Jones, P. Feltz, A. Frost, SPASH FFA, Portage County Youth Leadership and others, this could not have been accomplished.

By April of the year, six of the buildings in the Park, were also made ready for the Society's "Great War" remembrance displays by Mr. Tim Siebert. The above ground trench was constructed due to the organizing efforts of Ms. Sue Koehl. The publishing of a dozen books were also coordinated, written and published, for this display period, by Siebert, Koehl and members of the Society.

In April and May the "Old Time School" program for public and parochial 3rd and 4th grade students was organized, implemented by Mary Beth Anday with the help of Carl Whittaker and volunteer teachers. Thanks to all participants in this program.

On April 6th Heritage Park was opened to a select groups of visitors by officials of the Village of Plover to commemorate the entry of the United States in WW I. The first visitors to the "Great War" display were members of Vice Admiral Grant's family. A number of meetings were held and groups visited the display at the Park before its official opening on Memorial Day, for the general public. All through the "season", from Memorial Day to Labor Day, the average of 15 to 20 visitors a day came to the Park on weekends. A number of people and groups also stopped by on week days when we were "closed". Even though this impeded con-

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The Pinery struction, it was a good problem to have and we are thankful for it. In June a "thank you reception" was held for supporters of the Agricultural Museum in conjunction with "Heritage Days", where the first display, "Grandpa's Workshop", was revealed in the "Barn". The rest of June and July focused on development and construction of the archival area of the Agricultural Museum. This project continued until after Labor Day.

The windstorm that hit Portage County in June also allowed us to trim and cut back all trees at the Park. Thanks to Mr. Ron Ligman for organizing this project and for all his extraordinary work. We also like to thank Shulfers Landscaping for their dedication in maintaining the Heritage Park grounds throughout the year. An invaluable commitment.

In the fall, we have also started work on the post office building in the Park. All plaster has been removed. Now that demolition has been mostly completed, we will be focusing on restoration of this building, as we can afford it. The last group who "officially" visited the Park was on October 28th Since then we have been occupied by developing and constructing the display area of the Agricultural Museum. It has been a busy year.

Heritage Park also has been a recipient of a number of artifacts to enhance our collection. The Frank Tadewaldt's early Native American collection from Junction City, a gift from the John C. Heugel family, and the very well preserved school bell that hung at Glinski School on North 2nd St. from the Robert R. Kolinski family are now housed at the Hie Corner School. The Barnsdale Movie Camera from early 1900's (1904?) from the Gordon family, and a number of artifacts from the Engford family are now housed at the Engford house. These gifts are extremely important to fulfill the educational goals of the Society. Thank you.

Thanks to all of you for your support of Heritage Park and PCHS.



Are your dues up to date?

**No label here means your dues are up to date.
Thank You!!**

If your label is above, the Expiration date is shown. Example: Jan-18 means your dues have expired as of that date. Please renew using the form on page 7.



The Pinery

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Officers

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Eric McFarland Mary Beth Anday
Sarah Scripps Beverly West
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CWMR, Ltd

A monthly business meeting is held the second Wednesday of each month, except for December, at the Synagogue Museum, 1475 Water St. Stevens Point, WI., unless otherwise announced.

An Annual Meeting is held the second Wednesday of April at a location to be announced. An annual report and election of Directors occur at this meeting

The membership and public are welcome to attend any meeting.

Visit our website at:
www.pchswi.org

Visit us on Facebook



"The purposes of this organization are exclusively educational and shall be to preserve, advance, and disseminate knowledge of the history of Portage County, Wisconsin."

Joining the Historical Society couldn't be easier! Just fill out the form and mail it today. Membership runs from January - December of the calendar year. Please circle the level at which you are joining or renewing.

Student (ages 17-21)	\$15/year	Senior (62 & older)	\$20/year
Individual	\$25/year	Family	\$40/year
Business	\$50/year	Pioneer	\$100/year
Patron	\$200/year	Sustaining	\$300/year
Benefactor	\$400/year	Life	\$500

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/zip: _____

Phone Number: _____

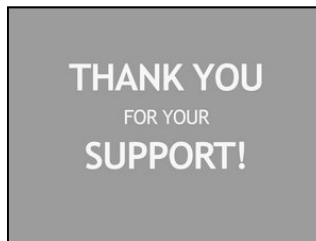
Email address: _____

- | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|
| General Funds | Heritage Park |
| Synagogue Museum | Historic Fire House No. 2 |
| Rising Star Mill | Other - specify |

No thanks, I don't want to become a member, but here is my tax deductible donation to the Society \$_____ Please circle your preference.

I'm interested in Volunteering, please call me at:

I have an artifact I'd like to donate, please call me at:



Mail this form with check made out to:

Portage County Historical Society

P O Box 672

Stevens Point WI 54481

Or contact us at:

Phone: 715-600-4930

E-mail: pchswi@gmail.com



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P O Box 672
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Happy Holidays

