

# THE EAGLE SPEAKS

CHIPPEWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 2008



"OLD ABE"



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## F.R.E.D.

ARLEY ENGEL

At 5:26 am on January 1, 2008 F.R.E.D. went by Engel's Little House on the Wheaton Prairie. That was the first sound that I heard after the New Years Ball fell in New York's Times Square at 11:00 pm our time, the 5:26 am freight train going past the 90th Street crossing west of Chippewa Falls. I'm sure there were many other sounds, but I'm a good sleeper.

This had to be a rather large train as noise carried on until 5:54 am. The grade of the rail bed west out of Irvine is a little over 2% and is a hard pull even for the 4800 H.P. diesel engines of the modern day trains.

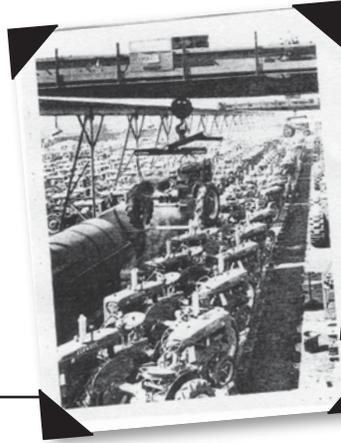
Having lived in this area for most of my life. Our home farm is about 1-1/2 miles west of here on county highway F, the buildings and about 9 acres of land are now owned by Gaylord E. Opegard, the retired Ag teacher from Chippewa Falls High. As a young lad on the farm we would be done with our evening chores a little after 7:00 pm and as we relaxed in the yard we would listen for the train coming west out of Irvine, this was still the time of steam engines.



Think Spring!

• Board of Directors  
Meeting on March 18

International Harvester tractors loaded onto railroad cars.



One happy boy "catch'n" the train!

## LOCAL NEWS

### STANLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DAVID JANKOWSKI, REPORTER

Our volunteers are spending Tuesday afternoons at the museum and remain busy doing research on the planned 2008 exhibits, filing, accessioning recently donated items, mending, repackaging wedding dresses, taking down 2007 exhibits, etc. Each time the group works they marvel at the in floor heat that was installed in our 2003 addition, and how comfortable it is to work in the building. It certainly takes away the chill of winter.

On Saturday, January 26, we held our annual meeting. A 12-noon potluck, with its usual nice variety of food, made for a jovial mood and basically an uneventful meeting. Primary business conducted at the annual meeting were the election of a Secretary and Treasurer and four members of the Board of Directors. Janet Solie and Twila Plummer were re-elected Secretary and Treasurer. Re-elected to the Board of Directors were Mark Bernklau, Margaret Fisk and Betty Plombon.

Financially, the museum experienced another good year. Total income was \$25,438 and expenses were \$31,533. Expenses exceeded income because of the building project that we are currently undertaking. So far we have razed the house on the site we intend to build on and that was expensive because of the needed environmental assessment, removal of asbestos, filling in the old basement, etc. Other costs included an architectural plan to meet state codes and having that plan approved by the state. Anyhow, everything is done, approved and the lot now awaits a new building.

COVER STORY CONTINUED

When we heard the mighty chug of the big old steamers my brother Eugene and I would get on our bikes and ride East on Highline road (called Highline road then because of the big power lines, 10,000 volts that ran along the road). This line came from the powerhouse and dam at Lake Wissota, built in 1917, to supply electric power to the powerhouse and dam at Lake Wissota, built in 1917, to supply electric power to the St. Paul, Minnesota area. We did not have company supplied electric power on our farm until 1941. When REA supplied electricity. Our power on the farm until that time was produced from a Delco Wind Charger system. It supplied 32 volts of power by charging four 8-volt batteries, with 4 batteries being on line and 4 batteries being charged. Mr. Opegard still has the instructions for this charging unit on a door in the basement of our old house at the farm.

As we are riding east on Highline road we may see Jerry Schneider catching us from the rear, then we give a holler to Bill Goulet, as we go by Clifford and Sylvia Goulet's farm. We take a left turn on Daggit and Lynn road, as we travel north on this road — remember the roads are still gravel and sand at this time. On the left about 1/2 mile down the road is the Joy, Molly and Clayton Lynn farm, across on the right is the Elmo and Dorothy Daggit farm. Marvin Lynn and Bob and Jim Daggit usually join in with our crew of bicyclist. We head north of these two farms on an old abandoned road that is passable, but not maintained, to the railroad crossing. Sometimes we would get there before the steam engines and have a chance to wave at the engineer and fireman as they passed by ever so slowly. There were usually five or six of us kids that made this trip two or three nights a week. Our goal was to see the flat cars that were loaded with new farm tractors.

Farmall tractors were our favorite, and we all drooled when two or three flat cars of H or M tractors went by. Being the rail grade was steep, going west the trains moved very slow in this area. You nearly wanted to hop on the railcar and just sit on one of them new tractor seats, and turn the steering wheel, and maybe even start it up and get the tractor off the train somehow. This would have been a great fantasy for a young lad of the 4th or 5th grade.

Sometimes we were excited by rail cars full of army tucks or even some new military tanks. Other times we would see troop trains with young men going to or coming from training camps. As the train went past the last unit was the caboos. There was always at least two men in the caboos, a conductor and a brakeman.

When was the last time you saw a train pulling a caboos? This is where F.R.E.D. comes into the story. F.R.E.D. is a Flashing Rear End Device mounted on the last car of the modern day trains. And now you have the rest of the story from Engel's Little House on the Wheaton Prairie. ♣



Shirley Liedl



## CALENDAR

### A VOLUNTEER PROFILE

MARY MCKENNA

# Shirley

This issue's volunteer profile, Shirley Liedl, has an important role vital to both genealogy and the historical society. Shirley is in charge of subscriptions to the newsletter and keeps the membership list current — noting change of address, expirations, and any other pertinent information. With her help, we know who needs to update their membership. She has color code on their address label to inform members gently that their membership fee is due. As this is an important part of our operating funds, we rely on her services.

A Chippewa Falls native, Shirley has always lived on the south side “hill”. She relates that her dad, George Smithers, worked for NSP at Lake Wissota and both he and her uncle, Frank Smithers, helped build the dam.

Shirley is a 1949 graduate of McDonell high school. A year later she married Bernard Liedl on June 27, 1950 at Holy Ghost Catholic church of which she is a lifelong member. The couple has two daughters, Barb Liedl and Linda (Thad) Hebert. Having a sister, Margaret Bennett, living in Portland, Oregon, prompts Shirley to travel there to visit her at least every other year.

Shirley began her working career in February, 1966 at the Mason Shoe office in the computer room continuing until June 1, 1991. Her volunteer service started in 1992. She enjoyed working on her own genealogy and so a partnership began. Co-worker, Betty Plombom, even suggested that she also work for the historical society and that goal was reached as well. She is also the treasurer for the Chippewa County Genealogical society.

For recreation, Shirley is an avid bowler. Her team, Sweeney's Bar & Grill, goes regularly to the State and National tournaments. This year they will compete in Detroit. Looking ahead, next year the tournament will be held in Reno, Nevada. Shirley hasn't divulged her average, but we're sure it must be “up there” with the high rollers. She does everything well and loves the game.

Having Shirley as a Volunteer is like bowling a 300 game — her “spare” time spent here is a lucky “strike” for us. 🎳

### Place these dates on your calendar

#### March 18

Board of Directors Meeting  
9:15 a.m. History Center

#### March 26

Council for Arts, History and  
Humanities  
5:30 p.m. Chippewa Falls  
Main Street

#### April 22

Board of Directors Meeting  
9:15 a.m. History Center

#### May 20

Board of Directors Meeting  
9:15 a.m. History Center

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**The Eagle Speaks** is published quarterly by the Chippewa County Historical Society, a non-profit organization established to promote and stimulate historical interest in Chippewa County, Wisconsin.

Mail any comments or future articles to 123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI 54729. 715-723-4399.

**Chippewa County Historical Society**  
123 Allen St., Chippewa Falls, WI  
**Open on Tuesdays | 9am-4pm**

## FEATURED ARTIFACT



### “Old Abe”

We are fortunate to have been give a feather from “Old Abe” the mascot of the Eight Wisconsin Infantry in the Civil War that Captain John E. Perkins sent to his family in 1862. Dan and Margaret McCann, who lived in a log cabin across the river from Jim Falls, gave an Ojibwe named Sky a bag of corn in exchange for a young eaglet he had captured. In 1862 now called “Old Abe” the eagle show his first action in the Civil War. Beside the feather we are fortunate to have part of Peter Lea’s civil war collection on exhibit. The exhibit features uniforms, muskets, soldier’s personal items, pictures and flags.

## A Message From Your President



The old saying “Time flies when your having fun” is true. I can’t believe it’s time for another newsletter. This gives me a chance to tell you about some exciting things that are happening.

First we held our semi-annual membership meeting Tuesday, February 19, 2008. The change in by-laws to elect the President and Treasure in an alternate year to the election of the Vice-President and Secretaries was approved. Arly Engel was reelected for another two-year term as Vice President and Mary McKenna’s term as Recording/Corresponding Secretary was extended one year to comply with the by-law change. Gail Willi and Lucy LeCleur were reelected for another three year Director term and Terri Stahr, a new comer, was elected to a three year Director term. Janet Seymour, Field Services Representative – Northern Region, Division of Historic Preservation – Public History, gave a presentation that included information on workshops and training, regional and annual conferences and other staff services and support.

We continue our effort to modernize the technology we use. Our four computers are now networked so any computer can access our collection information. We have an internet connection that allows us to do research and communicate through the internet. The Genealogical Society is sharing the cost of the internet connection so they can also use the connection. We also now have secured our domain name for our web site. Getting a web site up is still in progress so you wouldn’t see anything when you go to [www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety](http://www.chippewacountywihistoricalsociety).

Elly Rochester, our newsletter editor, has completed a redesign of our brochure, which will go to press early March and be on the streets by mid March. Another exciting thing that is taking place that will help the Historical Society is the formation of a group of organizations involved in history, arts and humanities. The new group has selected for its name Council for Arts, History and Humanities. The group is looking to provide all its members a stronger voice in the community. The group consists of Chippewa County Historical Society, Chippewa County Genealogical Society, Chippewa Falls Main Street, Chippewa Falls Museum of Industry & Technology, Chippewa Falls Parks & Recreation Department, Chippewa Falls Public Library, Cook-Rutledge Mansion, CVCA/Heyde Center for the Arts and Valley Art Association. I’ll keep you informed on what this new group is up to.

We have had a change in leadership for the Artifact Committee. Evie Frasch has stepped down as chairperson but will remain on the committee. Nancy Schuh is the new chair of that Committee. Another new development at the History Center is the loan of a photographic copy stand, which will allow us to use digital photography to make a record



# Donations



Wanigan – What? It's the floating restaurant where the cook lived and feed the loggers as they rode the log booms down the Chippewa River to the saw mill at Chippewa Falls.

## Donations in Memory of:

	<b>From:</b>	
Clinton M. Schimmel	Arley & June Engel .....	\$5.00
Clinton M. Schimmel	Richard & Kathryn Engel .....	5.00
Jared M. Johnson	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Lois M. Bowe	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Lavern 'Buzz' Richards, Jr.	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Gilbert 'Gib' Reischel	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Catherine Deuel	Gerald & Susan Joas .....	5.00
Clinton M. Schimmel	Judy Gaier .....	10.00
Mary Lou Maloney, Bernice Ione Dekan	Arley & June Engel .....	10.00
Richard Welke, Roberta Wermund	Arley & June Engel .....	10.00
Leona Steinmetz	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Mary Lou Maloney	Donald & Delores Bichner .....	25.00
Mary Ann Kraft	David & Shirley Pressler.....	10.00
Charles B. Wiltout	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Robert W. White	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Bruce Arthur Hopkins	Arley & June Engel .....	5.00
Bruce Arthur Hopkins	Kathy Forsgren.....	5.00
Bruce Arthur Hopkins	History Center.....	\$10.00

## Other Donations

	<b>From:</b>	
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John Repp .....		10.00
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Thomas & Laura Larson.....		5.00
Dan & Jacque Daniel.....		10.00
Gale & MaryAnn Engel.....		5.00
Heidi Rushmann .....		20.00

## From Visitors:

.....	\$2.00
.....	35.00
.....	2.00
.....	7.00
.....	7.00
.....	2.00
.....	10.00
.....	10.00
.....	4.00

## Contributing Member

Loretta Forrest .....	\$50.00
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## DON'T FORGET TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP:

Allen, Mr. & Mrs. Robert  
 Carlson, David  
 Cunningham, Mary  
 Daniel, Danny & Jaque  
 DeLong, Susan M.  
 Ferguson, Jan F.  
 Heyen, Leola M.  
 Kenealy, Ken & Toni  
 LaFaive, Clara  
 Lux, Blanche Martin  
 Mazur, Conrad & Judith  
 Meyer, Wayne  
 Murphy, Ione  
 Nehring, Peggy  
 Oman, Paul  
 Pinch, Harriet  
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 Roth, I.D.  
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 Smith, Virginia  
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 Willi, Bernard  
 Willi, Lois

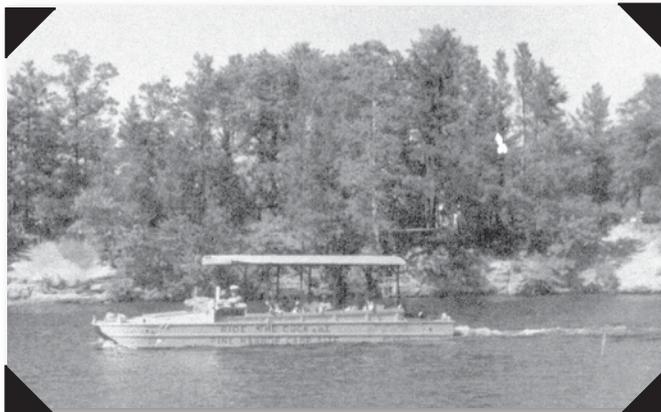
*Check for your membership information here!*



## Chippewa County Genealogical Society Membership Meeting Change

Regular membership meetings will be held on the fourth Saturday of the months of January through May, and September through November.

Committees in sync!



Ever been to Wisconsin Dells and taken a ride in a duck? Well you could "Ride the Duck" at the Pine Harbor campsite in the 1960s and had a one hour excursion on Lake Wissota for \$1.75 with pilot Lester Dodge.

### Chippewa County Historical Society Committee Members

❖ **Collection & Artifacts:**

\* Nancy Schuh, Evalyn Frasch, Donovan Olson, Vicki Nelson, Terri Ouimet

**Photography Sub Committee:**

\*Lucyann LeCleur

❖ **Building & Grounds:**

Don Bichner

❖ **Education:**

\*Arley Engel, Dave Gordon, Gail Willi, Cathy Lee

**Docent Sub Committee:**

Lalie Boos, Pat Ahneman

❖ **Exhibits:**

\* Arley Engel, Don Bichner, Eugene Harm, Nancy Schuh

**Historic Markers Sub Committee:**

\* Tom Larson, Jim Schuh, Arley Engel, Kurt Gaber

❖ **Finances:**

\*Dave Gordon, Kathy Forsgren

❖ **Membership:**

\*Shirley Liedl, Mary McKenna

**Telephone Sub Committee:**

\*Mary McKenna

❖ **Publicity:**

\*Jim Schuh, Betty Plombon, Wayne Meyer

❖ **Space Utilization:**

\*Don Baker

\* *Chairperson*

### President's Message CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

of our artifacts and items in our photography collection. We decided that it is more efficient to use digital photography verses scanning our pictures. Donna Bourget has volunteered to begin working on this project.

Well that's about it from 123 Allen Street. Don't be a stranger at the History Center. Whether it's to visit or to volunteer all are welcome. *Dave* 🍷



### LOCAL NEWS CONTINUED

#### Stanley Historical Society CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2

We have been putting considerable time and energy in to fund raising for the new building. So far the fund drive has raised slightly over \$70,000. Our goal is \$162,000.

We have been soliciting rough bids for the foundation and site work and the building shell with hopes of beginning construction this spring. We expect with around \$100,000 we will begin construction. Although we have never borrowed money for a building project we are considering a short-term loan from a bank or borrowing money from members in order to get the building up and enclosed. We would like to have our 1906 Cadillac and the 1,500-beer tap display available as soon as possible. And, of course, we desperately need the storage space the project will afford.

Our volunteers are working hard on our 2008 exhibits. This year the museum will feature special exhibits on the Town of Worden and the 1958 tornado that went through south of Stanley in the Town of Edson and the Town of Worden. If any reader by chance has any personal information from experiencing this tornado or did cleanup in the area, or has pictures that may be of use, please contact Connie Pozdell at 715-644- 5320. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

We will again open weekends after Memorial Day and invite visitors to see our many exhibits. We are also open on Tuesday afternoons during the winter months.

# Ben Franklin

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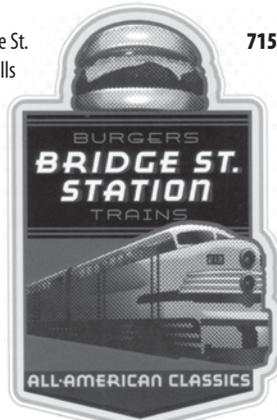
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# THE EAGLE SPEAKS



MARCH 2008

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