

MISSION STATEMENT

Preserving the past for future generations by collecting a unique and enduring collection of Polk County history shared with the public through programs, exhibits and research.

MUSEUM HOURS

Thursday - Monday
Noon to 4pm
Open Memorial Day
Weekend
through Labor Day

ADMISSION

No fee for admission.
Donations appreciated.

102 Main Street
PO Box 41
Balsam Lake, WI
54810

715-485-9269

Email:

info.polkcountymuseum.org

HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE
ELEVATOR FOR ALL
THREE FLOORS
AIR CONDITIONED

Check out our
new website!



this issue

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A Season Full of Opportunities

It's 2020 and we are excited to begin another Polk County Museum season! It's been 83 years since the formation of the Polk County Historical Society and we are ready to continue its rich tradition. Our goals and objectives will continue to be:

- ✓ Provide Polk County residents and visitors the opportunity to immerse themselves in the culture and history of the Polk County Area.
- ✓ Present programs and develop exhibits which will both educate and spark curiosity.
- ✓ Preserve and procure historic artifacts and archival documents pertinent to the Polk County people.
- ✓ Preserving the past for the future, educating the community and chronicling for generations to come.

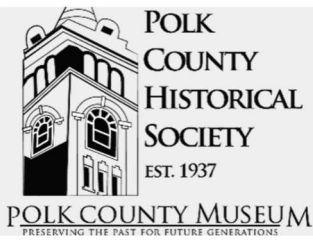
In 2020, we will begin the New Year with a new website. It is our hope that our new design will allow us to better connect with our members and community. In addition, our social media presence on Facebook and Instagram helps us bring Polk County history

and items in our museum collection to an online audience, who may not be able to visit our museum in person. This year we will begin a new Director search and look forward to finding someone who has the same passion for our mission. Finally, we have planned an ambitious 2020 museum season to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the end of WWII. It's shaping up to be a great museum season!

Greta Palmberg, President
Polk County Historical Society

***History lays the groundwork for strong, resilient communities.
No place really becomes a community until it is wrapped in human memory: family stories, tribal traditions, civic commemorations.
No place is a community until it has awareness of its history, strengthened when we share stories and experiences.***

***The Values of History:
Seven Ways it is Essential***



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Greta Palmberg
Board President

Al Foxwell
Board Vice President

Hilari Henke
Treasurer

Larry Smetak
Secretary

Ruth Mugerauer

Katie Cran

Tom Magnafici

Caroline Rediske

Scott Smith

Steve Sylvester

Board Meetings are held the 1st Thursday of the month at the Polk County Museum during season and at the Polk County Government Center in the winter. The public is encouraged to attend!



A Recap of 2019 Activities

A New SOO Line Railroad Exhibit was developed last winter by our Polk County Historical Society volunteers. Part of our village site was reconstructed and transformed into a small railroad depot. Newly donated artifacts helped enhance our depot and tell the story of the SOO Line through Polk County. The exhibit was well received by school tours and our summer guests.

We had a great turn out at our robotic milking barn tour in June at the Minglewood Farm in Deer Park. This was followed by a visit to the Clear Lake Museum.

During the month of July, we hosted the PALY America's Wolf Display. This was highlighted with a free Predators Presentation from an educational specialist with the MN Wildlife Science Center on July 13th. The crowd at the museum was totally enthralled by this great presentation!

August was the time set for a recognition of the Wisconsin Supper Club Era. Our annual fundraiser was held at Brow Tine with over 130 on hand for an exciting event, meal, silent auction and speakers. It was the highlight of our summer as we were able to reconnect with new interested friends, and longtime members. Thanks to all of our

Looking at the Past: 2019

A year of fun with the SOO Railroad Exhibit, PALY Wolves Exhibit, Minglewood Dairy Tour, and WI Supper Club Event!



community sponsors and patrons, who helped us raise close to \$10,000 for the work of the PCHS and museum!

Summer Staff and Volunteers

Sandra Stevermer was our director again, doing her well-planned efforts at spring opening and getting school tours lined up, along with grant writing and general museum duties. She stepped down in the fall to pursue retirement activities. All shared in a heartfelt thank you for her many years of service!

Laurie Vugteveen was with us this year as assistant director, and found herself deeply involved in display arrangements in both the railroad displays and our church room. She made sure we were well-staffed for "Freedom Fest" with amazing crews handing out over 550 root beer floats over the two days.

Kyla Vugteveen was on hand many days as our summer intern. She was able to gain on the job experience as greeter, and in sales in our gift shop.

Tammy Henderson was back in August as our "schoolmarm", assisted by her daughter, Michelle. They taught in our one-room schoolhouse with about 30 students during our two summer sessions of Pioneer School.

One of the most historic and captivating features of the Polk County Museum is the building itself and this year we celebrated 120 years of its history! The Courthouse, Sheriff's residence and Jail were completed by Sept. 7, 1899.



Looking to the Future – Our 2020 Season



September 2, 2020 marks the 75th Commemoration of the End of World War II; the biggest and deadliest war in history that involved virtually every part of the world during 1939–45. Unlike some conflicts which have imprecise starting and ending dates, World War II, for the United States, had a very distinct beginning - Pearl Harbor, and a definitive end - the surrender of Germany, May 8, 1945 and the formal surrender of Japan, September 2, 1945.

The victory that had been achieved in WWII had come at great cost and sacrifice, and the impact of the war left its own historical mark on Polk County. During the 2020 museum season the Polk County Historical Society will focus its activities and events around this anniversary. Here is a list of some of our planned activities:

- Updating of the WWII Exhibit in the Military Room of our museum
- Research into the WWII artifacts, documents and photos in our archives
- WWII 75th Anniversary – Fundraising Event - June 6th, 2020 at Brow Tine
- Polk County WWII Speaker Event - Sept. 3, 2020 at Unity Auditorium
- WWII presentations to area high schools



Help us tell the story of Polk County during WWII

We are updating our WWII exhibit in the Military Room of the Polk County Museum in honor of the Greatest Generation.

How can you help?

We are looking for artifacts, documents, pictures and stories of WWII veterans and citizens of Polk County.

If you have an item or story that you would like to donate or share with the Polk County Museum, please contact us through our email (info@polkcountymuseum.org) or on our website.

Help us preserve Polk County's past for future generations!



www.PolkCountyMuseum.org

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram!

Save the Date June 6, 2020 WWII Museum Fundraising Event

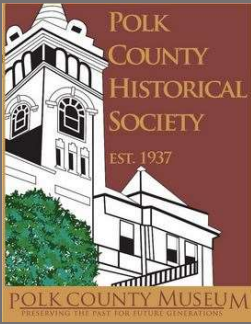
You don't want to miss this WWII fundraising event featuring fun, food, drinks and dancing with a 17-piece orchestra! It's going to be an amazing military-themed night at the Brow Tine Event Center. Tickets are limited and will go on sale in February through our website. Please join us for a night honoring the Greatest Generation!

Save the Date Sept. 3, 2020 WWII Speaker Event

Join us at 7:00pm on Thursday, Sept. 3rd at the Unity Auditorium as we commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of WWII. This FREE community event is co-sponsored by many Polk County historical societies and organizations.

Our featured speaker will be Richard Carlton Haney, author of *'When is Daddy Coming Home?' An American Family During World War II*. He is a professor emeritus of history at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater and earned his Ph.D. in history from UW-Madison and later graduated from West Point's post-doctoral military history program and the Army's National Security Seminar at Carlisle Barracks.

The night will also feature stories and displays of the impact of WWII on Polk County. Stay tuned for more information on this historic community event!



Membership

Please consider joining or renewing your membership to the Polk County Historical Society!

Individual: \$15.00
Family Annual: \$25.00
Patron Annual: \$50.00

Your membership is important to the success and future of the Polk County Historical Society!

Why is museum membership important?

- **The Polk County Museum is a non-profit organization which relies on gifts, grants, donations and annual memberships for its financial stability.**
- **Membership dues at the Museum are unrestricted, which means they support our annual operating costs and are not restricted to a specific program or fund.**
This is important to distinguish, because much of the Museum's other funding, such as grants and major gifts, frequently is restricted to specific projects and doesn't cover our day-to-day operating costs.
- **Membership is an invaluable cultural component to the Polk County community.**
Not only do memberships provide significant financial support for our museum to operate on, it allows us to continue to offer FREE admission into the museum and offer free educational events and activities to schools, organizations, and our Polk County community.

How do I join or renew my membership?

To become a member or renew your membership:

- ❖ Click on our "Donate" button on our website (polkcountymuseum.org) to sign up for membership
- ❖ OR Mail membership dues to:
Polk County Historical Society
PO Box 41, Balsam Lake, WI
54810

Museum Highlight

Mark Staples of Star Prairie, WI visited the Polk County Museum this summer to view his wooden replica of the Borgund Stave Church located in Norway. It took Mark just over two years to construct this replica of the church and was built by using pictures of the original and research using books and the internet.

During the Christianization period in Norway, wooden churches were built. Stave also means a cane or wooden pole. The stave churches are held up by four main posts, which are said to represent the four gospels. Twelve secondary posts are scattered throughout the building representing the twelve disciples. The staves were put on a stone foundation which prevented rot. The exterior was coated with a pine pitch to protect against the elements. It is thought that the tall design with many roofs was to bring your eyes up to heaven.

There are 7,300 cedar shingles in Mark's replica, each one of them handmade. The original Borgund Stave Church was constructed around 1180, Mark's replica was completed in 2005. It was entered in the Nordic Fest national competition at Decorah, IA that year and was awarded the People's Choice Award for woodcraft division. In 2006, Mark was able to finally visit the church in Norway. He later donated this magnificent replica to the museum and it is proudly displayed representing the many Norwegian immigrants who came to Polk County, Wisconsin.

