

2014Q1, History Corner:

Introduction, for the next Brainerd Newsletter (Jan., Feb. Mar.-2014):

Starting in this issue, look for the new ***"History Corner"***! Just for fun, local historians will be listing some interesting Brainerd historical facts and finds for you to look for, things we know but you may not. You may have to go hunt for them, and there are now many places to look, such as the *Crow Wing County Historical Society's* Research Library or website, or the *Brainerd Public Library's* City Directory section, and even the *City of Brainerd's* website's new history section, which includes tours, videos, vintage maps and newspapers. Some things will have to be searched the old fashioned way...on foot!

Much of our history is still yet to be discovered and resides in the memories of our residents, and this is where YOU can help US. Turning the tables, we may pose a question to you, like a "have you seen" or "do you remember" item. You may have old photos or stories to share. Please call City Hall or go to the Brainerd website's history page (<http://www.ci.brainerd.mn.us/history/>) if you think you can help. Now go hunt for the first *History Corner*, and let's have some fun with history!



Early in Brainerd's history, this man was often called ***The Father of Brainerd***. He arrived here in 1870, and in 1886 an oil portrait of him was commissioned. After his death in 1902, his family gave the painting to the City of Brainerd. The canvas somehow took on a nasty tear at the bottom, which may be why it was missing until 1921, just before Brainerd's 50th anniversary celebration, found in the City Hall attic. There was talk of restoration at this time, but this project was only revisited in 2008, and now, 127 years later, it been fully restored.

Q.: What is this man's name, and where is the portrait now? (Answer in the next issue, but we hope you find it much sooner!)

2014Q2:

History Corner: (April, May, June, 2014)

A.: Answer to the question in the last issue: The portrait is of **Lyman P. White**, the Father of Brainerd. The 1886 restored painting can be found in the “attic” top floor of the Crow Wing County Historical Society’s museum on Laurel St.

There are some city buildings and structures turning a hundred next year. It’s time for a Centennial birthday celebration this summer! We found 2 major buildings, and one VERY prominent and familiar structure built in 1914. But, there may be more. The City will be having a week-long celebration, June 16-22, 2014, so check it out on this website:

<http://www.brainerdhistoryweek.com> [Brainerd History Week](#)

Of course, this time we cannot provide photos as clues...that would be too easy! But, you can find a lot of research tools here: <http://www.crowwinghistory.org/> [Crow Wing County Historical Society](#)

Q.: Can you find these 3 locations (2 of the 3 are even dated)? Can you find us more? Are there any 1914-built residences? Does your house turn 100 this year?

2014Q3:

History Corner: (July, August, September 2014)

A: Answer to the question in the last issue: re: Centennial buildings: *Can you find these 3 locations (2 of the 3 are even dated)? Can you find us more? Are there any 1914-built residences? Does your house turn 100 this year?*

There were 3 major buildings built in 1914: The **City Hall** (dated), the Fire Hall, and the **Parker Bandstand** in **Gregory Park** (dated). Local researcher Ann. M. Nelson has rounded a vast collection of "Happenings" of 1914, and recorded them for you read about online here: http://www.crowwinghistory.org/brainerd_1914.html. All 3 and more were highlighted during the very successful Brainerd History Week. Let's start looking NOW for 1915 buildings and happenings!

Q: With all of the history talk in 2014, it is a good time to talk about another facet that has been brewing over the last few years, and is gaining steam... historic markers! Do you know where Brainerd's historic markers are located? There are only a few from Brainerd's early past, and some are just now being erected. In 1971 for our Centennial, 18 markers were planned, yet none was erected. 3 were put up in 1975 for the nation's Bicentennial. By the time we started revisiting the project in 2008, only 7 of these markers could be found on the intended sites. That year we found 7 more that were never installed, and in 2009 2 more. Two are just plain not to be found...yet! So, we have since placed 5 and that leaves 4 to go. All good things take time!

In 2013 the subject of markers came up again and some more important sites were identified. The City was able to obtain a Legacy grant for 4 more "graphic panel" style plaques that were installed in the spring of 2014. One more was funded via the library and Legacy funding, and still another privately funded; both are on order so look for these soon. Some smaller post markers are being put up until funding for something more permanent comes up.

In the last months of summer, get out and look around for these great historic markers, old and new! They are fun and informative...and bring some kids along! How many can you find?

- 3 vintage markers in 2 city parks, 1909, 1920/1930
- 12 Centennial markers, 1971
- brewery marker, 2009
- ski jump marker, 2009
- Brainerd's ONLY National Record of Historic Places marker, 2013, and there are many buildings on the list!
- 4 graphic panel markers, 2014
- 2 Buffalo Hills Trail markers, 2014
- 2 Cuyuna Lakes Trail markers, 2014

Upcoming events of historical interest:

Greetings from Crow Wing County Historical Society with a reminder of the book presentation to be held at the museum next Thursday, July 17, 2014 from 1 - 2 pm. Author Joel Arnold will discuss his book "Ox Cart Angel" about travel on the Red River Ox Cart Trail in 1862. Free for members and children up to age 18. \$3.00 suggested donation for all others includes museum admission if desired. See attached flyer for more information.

Crow Wing County Historical Society /Museum
(320 Laurel St)
P O Box 722
Brainerd MN 56401

email: history@crowwing.us

website: <http://www.crowwinghistory.org>

218/829-3268

History Corner: (Oct., Nov., Dec. 2014/2014/Q.4):

A.: In the last newsletter we mentioned the **1971 Centennial Markers**. In 1971 for our Centennial, 18 markers were planned, yet none was erected. Some were later installed, and more recently some more found and put up. Were you able to find any? If not, here are the locations...but two are still missing. Maybe someone out there can find them! One was up not too long ago, at least until the old 1901 **Park Opera house**/later Paramount Theater was torn down in 1994. See photos below. Notice the stone monument that holds the marker, right out front in the 1994 photo. The other one missing was for the **Original Courthouse**.



- 1) ***First Church** (St. Paul's Episcopal)
 - 2) **First National Bank** (SE corner 6th & Front Sts.) **NEWLY FOUND 2008!**
INSTALLED 2008.
 - 3) ***Jerry Howe Mill** (Boom Lake/Kiwanis Park)
 - 4) **Fire Hall** (first, Johnson Cigar building) **NEWLY FOUND 2008!** **INSTALLED 2008.**
 - 5) ***Hallet Trading Post/Ferry Crossing** (by the Dairy Queen)
 - 6) ***Original Dam Site** (by the paper mill, north end)
 - 7) **Lumberman's Hospital** (parking lot of NE Liquor). **NEWLY FOUND 2008,**
installed 2009.
 - 8) **Headquarters Hotel** (diagonal from Sawmill Inn) **NEWLY FOUND 2009.**
Awaiting installation.
 - 9) ***First Northern Pacific Depot** (where the concrete water tower is now)
 - 10) **Original Courthouse** (diagonal from Fine Line Beauty Salon) **MISSING!!!**
 - 11) **Lyman White House** (SW corner of N 7th & Juniper) **NEWLY FOUND 2008!** **Awaiting**
installation.
 - 12) **Park Opera House** (former Paramount Theater) **MISSING!!!**
 - 13) ***Drexler Blacksmith Shop** (present/2014 US Bank)
 - 14) **Northern Pacific Shops** (on the Clock Tower building) **NEWLY FOUND 2008!** **Installed 2008.**
 - 15) ***City Jail, Original** (Actually second, this one was mis-labeled, Easy Riders parking lot)
 - 16) **Indian Lynching Site & Last Turn Saloon** (first, not present, diagonal from old Nash Finch building),
NEWLY FOUND 2008! **Awaiting installation.**
 - 17) **First School Site**, west end of Front St. **Awaiting installation.**
 - 18) ***Water Tower** (1975 project)
- (*Plaque already installed at the start of this project (2008), 7 total.)

Hallet, typical installation



Q. So the question for the quarter is...where did they go???

P.S.: There is history a'brewing again for a **Brainerd History Week** in 2015! Do you live in a 1915 house, or know of any 1915 buildings in town? Maybe we could have a "tour of homes", if only by car or bus. How about a happening from 1915? Here we go again!

History Corner: (January, February, March 2015/Q. 1):

Going in to a new year we can look back and reflect on what all went on in the history arena in our town in 2014. In the last 4 quarters we have talked about an 1886 restored oil painting, 3 centennial buildings for the 2014 Brainerd History Week, old 1971 Centennial markers that were not installed but now are going up, and even NEW historic markers. Two more were put in just before the snow fell, at 4th & Front and 6th & Front Sts. So a lot has been going on!

There is a good reason why more historic preservation has occurred in the last 5 years than the last 50. In a word...technology. Take a look at what tools most anyone has now that were not available for our 100th birthday in 1971 for instance.

City of Brainerd website, open to anyone in the world! Here is their new dedicated HISTORY page:
<http://www.ci.brainerd.mn.us/history/>

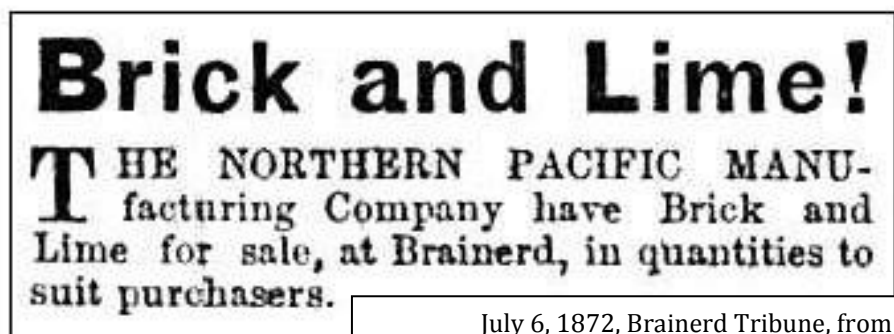
- All known maps are digitally scanned.
- You can take a virtual or audio tour of the Downtown History Walk right from here.
- See videos of the early history of Brainerd, even the mayor!
- Old newspapers are being scanned, 1872-1901...so far!
- A scan of an exciting newly-discovered publication from 1910!

Crow Wing County Historical Society (CWCHS): <http://www.crowwinghistory.org/>

- A local researcher has been scouring those old newspapers and transcribed thousands of pages in an easy to find searchable database, called *Special Features*. This is like an encyclopedia on Brainerd!
- A new pictorial book published by the Society.
- 1889-1914 Mortuary Records Project.
- Oral Histories Tape Digitization Project.
- Lots of Brainerd videos, genealogy, and links to more sites!

Because of all this new...well, OLD information is so at hand, more folks are looking in to their families' pasts here, looking at old buildings, digging up photos and really enjoying our local history. Perusing the *Special Features* the other day, I was looking for info on one of my favorite subjects, brick making in Brainerd. Up until an 1872 article was scanned lately, we thought bricks were first made here in 1878, and now we find out the NPRR was in the business in 1872! So go online, or let the folks at the Crow Wing County Society help you find what you need in their research library.

It is a FUN time to be a Brainerd history buff !!!



July 6, 1872, Brainerd Tribune, from
Special Features/Northern Pacific Railroad in Brainerd
on the CWCHS website.

Question for the quarter: On Dec. 16, 2014 a very old and historic building was razed in downtown, with little fanfare. (I stopped by looking for bricks!) It was about to fall over or cave in, and hardly a gem, but had an important community function in the early part of the 1900's. Where, and WHAT was it?

HISTORY CORNER:

From the last newsletter:

Question for the quarter: *On December 16, 2014 a very old and historic building was razed in downtown, with little fanfare. (I stopped by looking for bricks!) It was about to fall over or cave in, and hardly a gem, but had an important community function in the early part of the 1900's. Where, and WHAT was it?*

Answer: The Salvation Army building at 410 Front St. This building was moved here 100 years earlier, in 1914, from its location on 5th St. to make way for the new City Hall. After 1991 the Salvation Army moved to 424 Front St. in the former Minnegasco/State Patrol building. It later housed a radio station.

Incidentally, the building to its west on the SE corner of 4th & Front Sts. recently burned and is likely going to be demolished. It is at 402 Front St. and was a bakery in 1888. In 1892 it was a livery, 1903 a laundry, 1949 the H. R. Davis Army-Navy Store/Auto Sales/Hide & Furs, 1970's Fieldman's, and lastly attorneys' offices. This was the 3rd oldest building left on our once most built-up street.

The second annual

Brainerd History Week

runs June 15-21, 2015, and organizers have released preliminary plans for get-togethers throughout the seven days. Here are the tentative events:

Monday: Veterans day. There will be programs and speakers honoring all veterans of every war. There could be viewings of war-related films and possibly a display from Camp Ripley's museum. Events may be at the Armory or at the veteran's memorial near the Crow Wing County Historic Courthouse.

Tuesday: Again this year, there will be a tour of Evergreen Cemetery. Walking tour of the north side neighborhood, including houses of city founders and key leaders. The tours might include an inside look in some of the stops. A pie social will be hosted, too! Church visits.

Wednesday: Children's parade downtown. Also, a Native American community day, where representatives from the White Earth Nation and Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe will likely speak to residents about their government, and before the Brainerd City Council to raise awareness on tribal government practices.

Thursday: The Paul Bunyanland Cultural-Historical Society (PBCHS) will host an event at the former Wausau Paper site, now Brainerd Industrial Center, which will detail the history of the building and companies that set up there in the past. A picnic of former paper mill workers will take place.

Friday: Railroad day. There will be tours of the Northern Pacific Center buildings.

Saturday: Children's day in Gregory Park, with games and music. Possibly an antique car show.

Sunday: A multi-denominational church service in Gregory Park.

Throughout the week: Guided Downtown Brainerd History Walks.

Join us in a project that is a first of its kind! Bring in anything that will fit on a legal-size scanner. We can even scan old negatives, and slides. The program will run for 3 months.

We need your help!

Do you have historical photos of
the Brainerd Lakes Area?

The Brainerd Public Library would like to scan:

- Recent and old photographs and documents
- Buildings & People
- City Scenes
- 371 corridor change
- Postcards



These items would be scanned for historical and archival purposes. If you are interested in sharing your items please email us or make an appointment to meet with us. us.crowwinghistoricalphotos@gmail.com

Call the library at 218-829-5574 to make an appointment



March Appointment Times At:

Wed March 18 at 1pm-3pm

Tues March 24 at 10am-12pm

Tues March 31 at 5pm-7pm



This free program is made possible with funding from Kitchigami Regional Library through the State of Minnesota's Legacy Amendment funds to preserve arts and cultural heritage.

2015Q3 (July, August, September):

Last quarter we touched a bit on the upcoming **2015 Brainerd History Week** in June. At the time, there were only a small amount of items on the calendar, but it blossomed in to an EIGHT-day event!

Hardly an area in Brainerd was untouched by the events of the week. It started Sunday at the NP Center, then to the cemetery, back to Northside Brainerd, to downtown Brainerd, to the Dam & former Paper Mill, the college, and to Gregory Park for 2 days. After the event's second year, it has become obvious that there is a keen interest in history in Brainerd, and indeed a willingness for community support. How wonderful that we can celebrate our history and at the same time involve the kiddies in a parade and games in the park, churches, our veterans, Indian neighbors and more...ALL in one event!

It is hopeful that this will continue and evolve in years to come. The town has come, and in some cases gone from railroading to logging and lumber, then through the mining industry, paper and pulp manufacture, tourism and a host of other eras. But these were all building blocks to where we are at today, and a catapult to where we are going. Brainerd History Week highlights where we have been, and is critical to our future. It can be seen that the event can be not only be FUN, but an economic boost to the area. Let's start planning soon for the next one!

One of the most popular of all the events, the City's Water Power Dam Tour and the former Paper Mill tour at the Brainerd Industrial Center:



From March through May, the Brainerd Public Library hosted a program that took in over 300 photo scans from the public from around the county. The scans go to the Crow Wing County Historical Society for research and sharing purposes. They will be labeled and filed so one can easily search a topic by several key words. Most of the photos have never been seen before by researchers. A booklet is in production for viewing at the museum or checkout at the library. Many of these photos were featured in the Brainerd Dispatch as part of Brainerd History Week. One huge 1948 photo of the NP Shops and dozens of men showing off a recently completed box car was apparently a first...the right side filled the entire top front page of the paper, and the left side continued on the back page as a wraparound! We are currently trying to name all of the men pictured.



But now, some “history” that is in the future! In 2008 the Downtown Brainerd History Walk was developed, and we produced a bound booklet in 2012. For the 2015 Brainerd History Week local researcher Ann M. Nelson produced a similar booklet on the Northside Brainerd History Walk. Both booklets can be checked out at the Brainerd Public Library. Now under development is something new, the Riverview Brainerd History Walk! It will be ready for an upcoming walkable-bikeable event in Sept., and be designed as a get-fit walking...or biking or skating tour of historical sites along our wonderful river, and around Boom Lake. There are 4 graphics panel markers in the area, an old brewery, rail line and lumberyard site, and lots of birds and scenery...all on paved trails!



Brainerd City Newsletter, History Corner, 2015/Q.4:

This summer Brainerd has had some wonderful events that were focused on getting outdoors, and some included our rich history of the town. The City has been gearing up with more bike lanes, walking and biking paths, and historic markers and fun events. One such event was the Sept. Walk N Wheel, which included a bike ride, but also a **historical** walking tour, called the ***Riverview Brainerd History Walk***. On this walk you can get some exercise AND have some fun learning about our history and how the river was so involved. This Walk compliments the other two that are already in place and made in to a booklet available for checkout at the Brainerd Public Library. Find all THREE Walks online here:

[Brainerd History Walks](#)

Also at the library and [Crow Wing County Historical Society](#) (CWCHS) you can find the hard-bound printed version of the library's recent Photo Scanning Project, which took in nearly 300 little-seen unpublished photos and documents. You can check out the book at the library, or find the photos for research at the CWCHS.

If you are not one of the 4,400+ that have discovered Andy Walsh's awesome Facebook page yet, you are in for a treat! NEVER has there been such a community discussion, and one that has unearthed so many facts and photos and fun! Be careful, you might be in here for HOURS! Simply entitled:

["Share history and stories about Brainerd Lakes Area"](#)

Then something came up that we never thought would involve HISTORY! Every summer about 500 voyagers tackle the canoe journey of the Upper Mississippi River section from Lake Itasca to the first lock & dam at St. Anthony. All have to pass through our town of course, and need to portage around the dam. Only 50 such travels attempt the whole Mississippi trip to New Orleans, what canoeists call Source to Sea but only about 6 make it all the way. I was alerted to one such canoeist in particular, Mike Hatfield, from Bakersfield, CA of all places, now residing in Two Rivers, WI. But where does history come in to play, you ask? Mike has a mission to visit ALL of the historical societies along the river. He is also a gunsmith by trade, and is currently in school studying, History, English and Creative Writing. As if that does not keep him busy enough, he is videotaping the entire trip, on the river and in the museums! He also maintains a blog as he goes so you can follow his journey online at [HistoryRiver.com](#). This is all being done while on his trip. At each location, he sizes up firearms collections, shows the staff how to clean and preserve them, and provides guidance as to rarity and display.

Most museums have some donated vintage firearms, some are not displayed, rather sitting in a pile in the basement, and others have just a fraction of them on display. Well, when he got to Brainerd he was amazed by the wonderful collection on display on the ramps at the CWCHS. They had not been cleaned for a few years, so he saw an opportunity, and a challenge. The ones not displayed also impressed him, which were in the basement, as some of them had not yet been assembled or cleaned. It was then he decided that he was not leaving Brainerd without going through the ENTIRE collection, cleaning and preserving every last piece. This took 5 full days! The result is a fine collection of our early past in firearms, preserved for generations. Stop in at the CWCHS museum and take a look!

The City asked Mike to provide a story on how well Brainerd does to accommodate these canoeists. Mike is sending me a "paddlers view" story as soon as he can find internet access along the route, a modern-day necessity in his case. I will report on this at a later date, but he did tell me this. Our portage at the dam was one of the best he has encountered, as it was mostly paved (they use dolly wheels nowadays), only had about a 15' rise, and had restrooms! But, the best feature was a pleasant and easy to spot WELCOME sign, with good information, a place to sign in, even a hand painted mural! In fact, he bumped

in to a group of folks in a pontoon upriver, and one of their relatives was the one who painted the mural! The sign, placed in 1980, was that “first impressions are made at the front door” welcome mat. Mike reported that the Brainerd was “most accommodating”!



Brainerd river welcome mat!



Welcome, Mike Hatfield! Upriver portage landing.



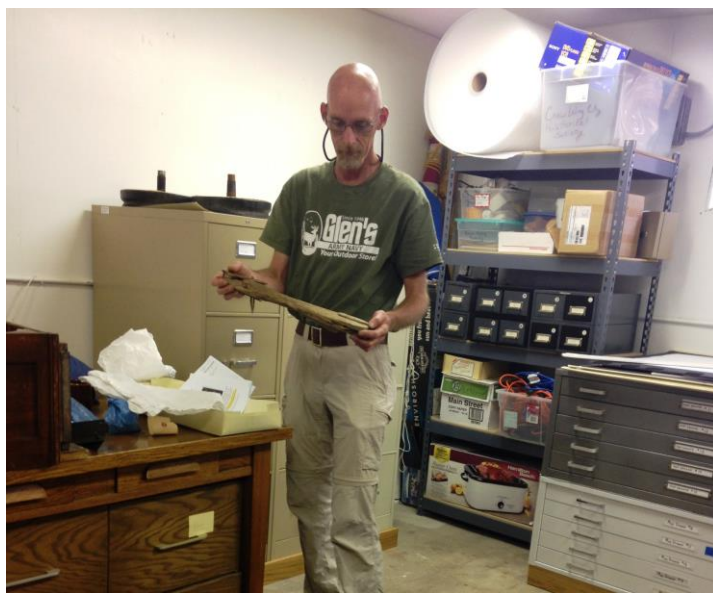
A VERY welcome sight!



Back on the “road” again, on the downriver portage.



I could have used a loading platform here on this pier!
The canoe landing sign was not visible by water.



Mike at Crow Wing County Historical Society.

Brainerd City Newsletter, History Corner, 2015/Q. 1:

Brainerd History Week-2016:

Very early reports are trickling in about the upcoming third annual event! This year's celebration of our local history will showcase Northeast Brainerd. Much of Brainerd's early industry started in NE, starting with Brainerd Lumber Co. that moved here from Gull River Village giving us the name of a street called Mill Ave.! An early Pulp Mill was built on the WEST side of the river, and later a paper mill on the east side. The area supported TWO brick yards, prompting a RR spur to be built to the area. Did you know there was even a RR depot out there for the Brainerd & Northern Minnesota RR? There was also a roundhouse for the electric street car rail line.

Some highlights will include:

Two different times for a Paper Mill presentation at Brainerd Industrial Center, walking tour of paper machine #6, Brainerd Dam tour, and a bus tour of the little-known Parker ELECTRIC street car Railroad as it was laid out in the early years. The **NP Center** plans some tours and a vintage auto show, and the 4-day event will wind up with games, several programs for kids and a church service in Lum Park, another wonderful NE feature.

Roundhouse Brewing Co.:

Around mid-December I was given a quick tour of the soon-to-open Roundhouse Brewing Company. I met with the landlord and was amazed at the infrastructure that is required for such an enterprise. The concrete floor was about 1/3 removed for wiring and piping of one kind or another. I suppose the large pipes were for fire protection and brewing use, then you have sewer lines, and drains, and electrical. Something was being placed in a pit, maybe electrical, and HVAC air and heating runs were ready to be suspended. I could not help but think how much simpler it must have been in the 1880's when these buildings were built, and the heat came from the main coal-fired heat plant across the street. For summer use, cupolas in the ceiling and opened windows were the only cooling system. Oh, how miserable they must have been in the summer without air conditioning. It is refreshing to see new life being pumped in these classic old buildings. The bricks they used were made right here in Brainerd, too! It has been over 100 years since beer was brewed commercially in Brainerd, so this will be fun to watch!

Facebook Page:

Last quarter I mentioned Andy Walsh's great page, [Share History and Stories about Brainerd Lakes Area](#). It then had 4,400 group members, and is now at nearly 5,900. But the amazing thing is the participation, and like the page's tiles suggests, the SHARING of wonderful photos and stories. Many of the photos have never been published since they are private family photos. I encourage you to stop by and see what you might remember from years ago, and perhaps you can help solve a riddle, or add some facts or photos.

CWCHS Membership Drive:

The *Crow Wing County Historical Society* is having a membership drive to help raise awareness AND funds for the increasing role they play in preserving history in our area.

Every year the Society provides services and entertainment to thousands of county residents as well as visitors to the area. But this takes a huge amount of support from area history buffs. A major and most reliable source of our funding comes from annual, repeat Society memberships. Among other things, last year the Carbine house log home at the fairgrounds was fully restored. This year the Wohl house log home there was elevated and got a new foundation, but now it needs repair and the roof leaks. Grant money can only be obtained by first securing local donations and in-kind labor. Continuing memberships provide a steady stream of funding for such projects.

The Crow Wing County Historical Society has been keeping tabs on Crow Wing County's history since 1927. The museum has three floors of exhibits including displays on the lumber industry, the railroads, mining, and home life. You can also walk through a period home, the Sheriff's Residence from 1917, and it's nearly all original! Yes, you can have your photo taken in a jail cell!

Please check out their website and see what they have been up to and consider a membership at one of the levels that start at only \$20. <http://www.crowwinghistory.org/>

1971 Centennial Marker; here, gone and back again!

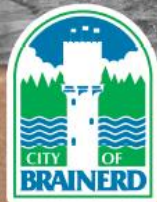
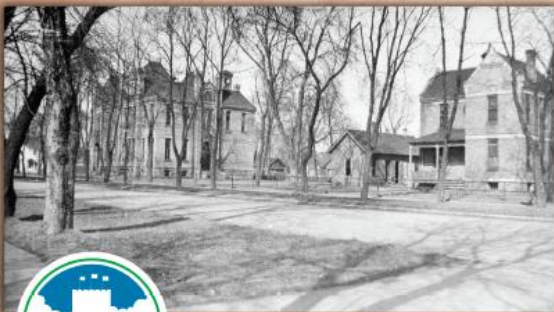
Sometimes things just work out! On Wed, 12/31/2014, a friend of mine called me to say that the 1971 Original City Jail monument and marker on Washington St. in front of Easy Riders was hit by a car the night before about 8:00 PM. It took out the entire monument from the base slab up, and destroyed the mounting slab on top. It also took out a streetlight, and I think some other cars. The news report did not mention the marker. By the time I got to the site all that was left was 3' of a streetlight pole, and a 2" protrusion of the concrete footing...poof, gone. The goose chase started. It turns out the marker itself was demolished and went out with the trash. The chase ended but the challenge to replace the whole monument just started. The insurance company would only replace it back to original, which would seem to make sense, but how do you replace an aluminum plaque that was made in 1970 at the Brainerd Foundry? I did find a company that would recreate the logo and cast a marker in the same fashion, but between the artwork fees and materials the price was far more than a graphic marker like we have been using for the last few years. The insurance company finally agreed and the City was able to order a new marker, and the city crews installed it. The part that worked out is that the new markers now have images and descriptions of far more than the old plaque could convey. Technically the old marker reading First Jail should have been Second Jail, as this location was the second jail used for city inmates, even though the first jail was a county facility. With the opportunity to clarify this and add the graphics, we think the new one is a good addition to highlighting our history by way of markers. Stop by and see it for yourself!



LOCK-UP

This was the site of Brainerd's second city jail, simply called the LOCK-UP.

It was built in 1886 on county land, just east of the 1882 County Jail and Sheriff's Residence sites on the corner. This put both city and county buildings in one condensed area for the first time.



County Courthouse, Jail & Sheriff's Residence



Also in 1882 the County Court House was built to the north, and it is now [2015] used as an apartment house. In the 1930's the County Jail and Sheriff's Residence were demolished, but the City Lock-Up prevailed and was used for storage for Meyer Cleaners for many years. As early as 1911 the building was in such poor condition that there was talk of demolishing it. In fact, "a state agent said the best thing to do with it is condemn it ... as it is not fit for use." Still, it was used as a jail until the new one was built along with City Hall and the Fire Hall in 1914.

In July of 1988 it finally succumbed to the wrecking ball to make room for a parking lot. In 2014 the original 1971 Centennial marker that stood here was destroyed by a car, and replaced in 2015 with this marker.

Brainerd City Newsletter, History Corner, 2016/Q. 2:

Brainerd History Week-2016:

The full itinerary for [Brainerd History Week](#) (BHW) 2016 will be released about May 1st., but here is sneak peek! This year's theme is **Northeast Brainerd**. The daily themes this year include:

Wednesday (June 15): Downtown Brainerd events including children's activities, Salvation Army 125th Anniversary Open House, Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe event, and Downtown History Walks.

Thursday (June 16): NP Center Tours, NP Event Space social event for the Share and Discuss Stories about the Brainerd Lake Area (CWCHS Fundraiser) and Roundhouse Brewery Beer Tasting.

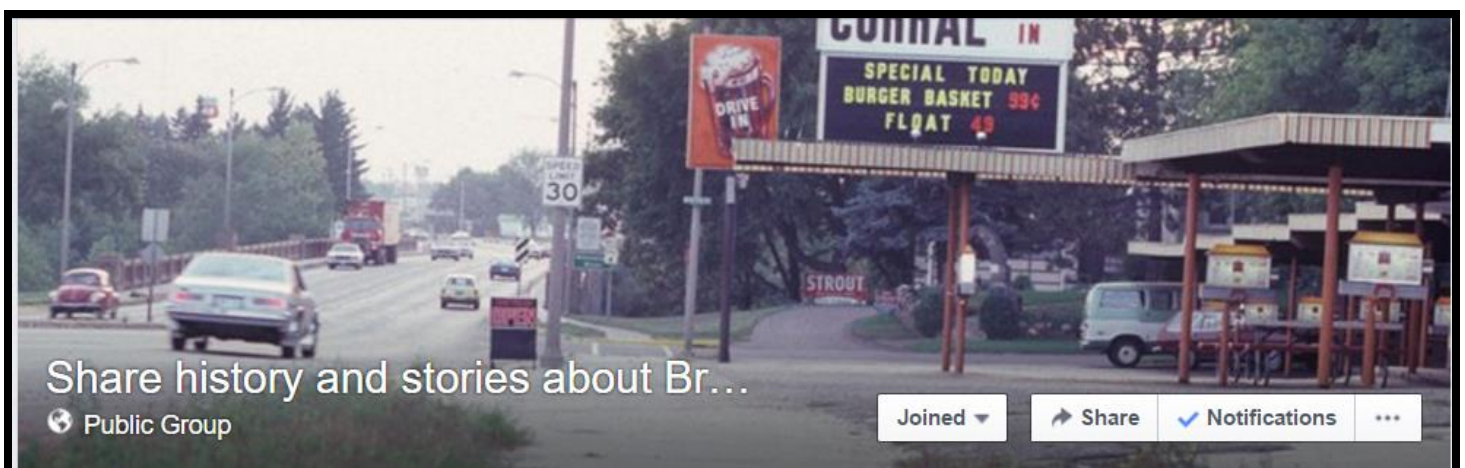
Friday (June 17): Brainerd Armory and Military open house, and CWCHS Museum Tours.

Saturday (June 18): Riverview biking, Evergreen Cemetery History Tour, **Brainerd Industrial Center** (100th birthday for paper mill building) and dam open house, BNSF equipment display and NE Brainerd historical bus tour.

Sunday (June 19): Lum Park family events.

Facebook Page:

Last quarter I mentioned Andy Walsh's great page, [Share History and Stories about Brainerd Lakes Area](#). It then had 4,400 group members, and is now over 6,500! But now there is a new twist. Facebook is of course a virtual medium. These folks are connected by way of the internet. Some old classmates have gotten reconnected on this website. More folks have made new friends...all virtually. But what if we could have a social event and connect some of these friends...LIVE! This is what we will attempt to do during the 2016 Brainerd History Week on the Thursday event day at the NP Center at 6:30 Thurs., June 16, 2016. We'll show photos that have come in on the site, and on the ones where we need names of people, we'll take them down if you can help! There will be booths with old Brainerd & RR memorabilia, and you can finally meet Andy! This will be an informal event with some food and beverages, but mostly just a time to, well, SHARE HISTORY!



Preserving history, one page at a time:

ONE word for the second quarter of 2016...SCANNING! The search engine giant google has a mantra to attempt to scan the entire world's collection of books. Well, we are starting our own goal of scanning everything we can on our own history in Brainerd and Crow Wing County. There are several scanning efforts going on as we speak. The [Crow Wing County Historical Society](#) is scanning their entire collection of historic photos so they can be found easily in their computer, and printed or shared online. The [Brainerd Public Library](#) is working on scanning such things as documents, yearbooks, Brainerd City Directories, old newspaper microfilm and more, from their own collection. One huge part of this project has been the offering of over 1,500 photos from the former paper mill. These have been locked up in the building since at least 1916, and here 100 years later Mike Higgins of BIC, ([Brainerd Industrial Center](#)) has allowed them out for scanning. Just one small packet of large format negatives has revealed before-unknown clues and a visual



record of the entire rebuilding of the dam, new pulp plant, paper mill and electric plant. These 212 images were all dated to the day, so we can produce a slideshow to show the project almost in real time. This slideshow will be shown at the Brainerd History Week event there at BIC on Saturday, June 18, 2016.

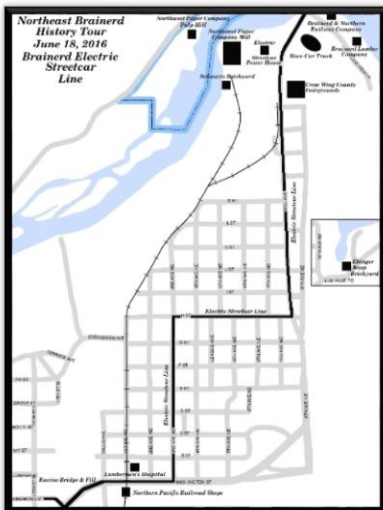
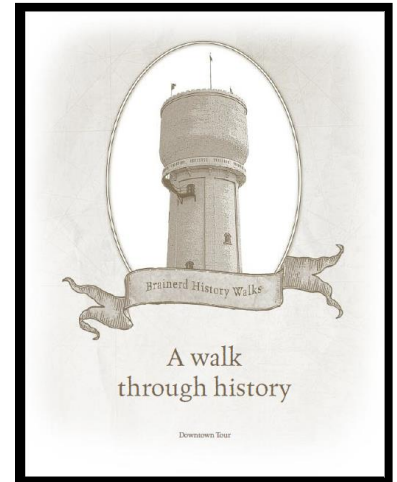
Once again this year there is a 3-month long [Library Photo Scanning Project](#). Please share your vintage photos and documents by calling the library to set up a time slot. [(218) 829-5574] We scan twice/week through May. Last year we produced a hard-bound book of 295 “new” old photos! Yes, we can scan your negatives AND slides! Find the schedule and more here:

<http://fertfaust.wix.com/brainerd-history#!photo-scanning-project/cxrk>

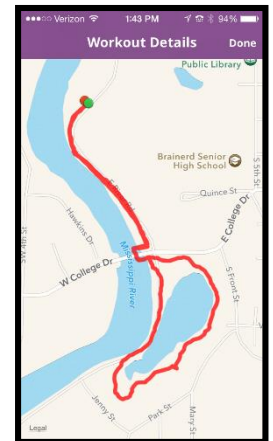
2016 Brainerd History Week, a recap:

For its third year, the week proved again that history is alive and well in Brainerd! So many reports have come in from folks that had such a good time at the events, and many of those commented on how much history our town really does have...and can still be seen! Here are some of the things that went on during the week, and ideas on how you can experience them all year long!

-Downtown Brainerd History Walk: There were 3 guided tours during the week, but you can take the Walk yourself anytime! Just stop at the Brainerd Public Library and check out a booklet. It is written to be self-guided; you just read and walk! The route is only about a mile and takes around an hour, highlighting many buildings that are no longer with us, and many more that still look great and are serving the community. Dates of construction and ownership are detailed, so you may find out many things you did not know. You can even check out a CD and download it to your mobile device, and have it read to you! Here is a thought. Bring the booklet and audio to a friend who may not be able to do the actual walk. The booklet is visual with lots of vintage photos, and you will be surprised at the memories these photos bring up.



-More Walks...and a ride! During History Week, a new tour was developed by local researcher Ann. M. Nelson. *Reichert Bus Service* donated a coach and 2 RIDES were taken along a route that recreated the 1890's Parker Electric Railroad in its NE Brainerd area. Again, if you missed it, you can hop in your car, or on a bike, and give yourself the tour! There are a few booklets available at the *Crow Wing County Historical Society*, which were donated by our local active railroad, BNSF. On the back is the route, and you can download the *Tour Guide Notes*, and the booklet, *A Brief History of Northeast Brainerd*, here: [Brainerd History Walks](#) If you are interested in NORTH Brainerd, see the 2015 *Northside Brainerd History Walk*, and another *Brief History*, here: [Crow Wing](#)



[County Historical Society](#) Would you like to get out along the river and see some history? There is even a RIVERVIEW Walk!

-Once again one of the most popular tours was at the **NP Center**, which guided folks through the 1883 Clock Tower building and several other wonderful vintage brick buildings. AND, those beautiful Milwaukee Cream bricks were made right here in Brainerd! On Thursday night the **NP Center Event Space** was home to something different, a fundraiser for the *Crow Wing County Historical Society*, but with an interesting slant. It brought together folks that had for the most part only met on a virtual basis, a local Facebook site about Brainerd. Researchers and history buffs met un-virtually! Find the Facebook site here: [Andy Walsh's Facebook Page](#)

-Saturday was a fun day at BIC/**Brainerd Industrial Center**, the former paper mill complex, where folks could tour the building and view a slideshow presentation with photos not seen since 1916! These have been locked up on the premises until private ownership allowed scanning of over a thousand photos.

-A **schedule booklet** was available that used a dozen vintage photos of early Brainerd scenes. The unique thing is that all of these photos were donated by ordinary folks to the *2016 Photo Scanning Project*, from their private collections. See it here: [Brainerd History Week](#)



Turcotte Grocery - 315 South 6th St. (Steve Shepherd)

In conclusion, you will see that local history is not limited to just one week in the summer. No doubt there will be a 2017 Brainerd History Week, but in the meantime, discover what is available RIGHT NOW by visiting some of the above websites, and your local historical society and museum!

-CWF, 7/6/2016

2016Q4 Newsletter:

It never ceases to amaze us how much Brainerd history is being “dug up” in recent years. The internet has played a large part in this, since photos and stories can be sent all over the world for all to read, AND comment on. Never before has so much information been coaxed out of the minds of residents! It has been mentioned here before many times, but a popular social media method is being used locally for the sole purpose of sharing history and stories about the brainerd lakes area; in fact, that is the name of [Andy Walsh's incredible Facebook page](#). If you have not seen it, please at least consider viewing it. You do not have to sign up to browse; just to comment. If you “don’t do Facebook”, just do a drive-by! I know of no other media that can gather so many like-minded people in one place ALL with one thing in mind...**sharing Brainerd history**.

I reemphasize this in Quarter 4 since most new activity in the local history arena is now starting or blossoming via this one website. Here are two more examples:

Digging up history...literally. A group of guys from the Twin Cities area have been digging up old outhouses...privies, for about 30 years. They locate the 100+ year-old pits with steel probes and ask permission from the lot owner, call the local utilities to have it flagged, then start digging. They have done a few in Brainerd in years past, but were looking for some help from the locals in finding the sites. This is where the above mentioned Facebook page comes in. They found Andy's site on an internet search, and Andy led them to me. Within 2 weeks we were digging here, and out spilled dozens upon dozens of old medicine bottles, china and pottery, chamber pots, porcelain dolls and you name. At least 3 late 1800's bottles were unearthed from otherwise unheard of pharmacies and beverage bottlers. The diggers take a few items for their collections, and the homeowner gets the rest. There were enough of some great items to donate to the Crow Wing County Historical Society (CWCHS); see the 3 pictured. The rest of the items will be cleaned,



meticulously labeled as to where they came from, researched and displayed for a winter show at the CWCHS museum. Now whodathunk old history would come out of an old biffy? Apparently, the privy was the household's garbage dump as well. The 4 bottles shown were all from Brainerd. The Wm. Bredfield bottles had never been seen before! In another dig, 2 unheard of bottles were found: Cable's Pharmacy, and The Post Office Drug Store, both 1880-1900 vintage. More can be found in the [Brainerd Dispatch's great article](#).



How can you help? If you have an older lot or house on an older lot, say 1910 or earlier, you have a good candidate for a Privy Dig. Vacant lots are sometimes the best prospects! You will need to white-flag the perimeter and request an 811 “locate” so underground utilities can be located, which can take up to 5 days, so plan ahead of the diggers. <http://call811.com/> These guys usually keep the items they need for their collection, but always share with the owner if they like. Owners often donate some items if they are needed by the local historical society. Discuss the arrangement AHEAD of the dig! Or, call the diggers directly and they can make all of the above

arrangements for you: Give Mark a holler at (651) 329-0815 (text is best), or myoung6766@aol.com.

Bringing history BACK: Again, someone was browsing around in Andy's Facebook page, and ran in a photo that had something in it that looked familiar. A few years back he bought over 60- 13' long steel lattice-weaved "fence panels". These were very heavy to the tune of 500# apiece, and had no welding, just rivets. He used them for livestock panels to contain his pigs, chickens, horses, goats and cattle. But these unusual panels looked like the same design as the bridge railing on a photo Andy posted about the 1898 Laurel St. Bridge. Well, one thing led to another and we went out to have a look, and sure enough, there was the upper side of the old bridge, still being used 118 years later! He has a few that



are yet unused, so we got to thinking. Wouldn't it be fun to have some history actually come back home? But it gets better. We know the whereabouts of the 4 original 1898 cast iron plaques that were on the bridge when it was built. If it can be coordinated and financed, we'd like to have a panel or 2 brought back to the bridge location and a plaque re-mounted. Another 2 could be use in front of the CWCHS museum to frame out the soon to be restored old NPRR baggage cart. This project will take LOTS of legwork...hauling of the heavy panels, sandblasting and painting, installation and permissions to dig. But if accomplished, this will be a first in Brainerd, and we will be proud that we saved something for future generations. **Can we do it?**

-CWF, 10/17/2016

2017Q1, History Corner:

Writing this first quarterly History Corner of the new year, I looked back at all of 2016 to see if I missed anything as far history doings in Brainerd. I think I could have filled a few more pages, but as you can imagine there are always space restrictions. So, re-reading past issues has me looking for something I see as a trend, and it is obvious!

If there is a common theme and movement in Brainerd, it is the embracing of our past, particularly in graphics such as photo enlargements. For the first Brainerd History Week, we made a list of businesses in town that display art or photos pertaining to Brainerd history, and the list was surprisingly long! This year it has gotten longer, but folks are getting more inventive. One of the earliest on-site graphics we found were the wonderful murals painted by Kath Porwall at the Post Office. Have you seen them? Next time you go to mail a package, turn around and look up! She also did a great mural on the south side of the Parker Building (E. L. Menk), and several at Rafferty's pizza. Since there is a noticeable absence of art in downtown Brainerd, there is a movement to get some more murals out there.



Moving inside, one can find many examples of Brainerd history. The most inventive can be found at Design Consign in the 1882 First National Bank Building. The owners have uncovered the original windows on the inside, but of course the outside was covered up with stucco years ago. They went to the Crow Wing County Historical Society (CWCHS) and asked what one would have



seen out of these windows back in the day. They found a good quality image of the Ransford Hotel and enlarged it to 8' tall and pasted it on the west window. On the north window is the concrete water tower as it was seen in 1919. Can you imagine recreating history so that YOU can see what a person in 1919 would have seen out of that window in that very spot? This could be done all over town.

Two new restaurants in town have decorated their walls with dozens of vintage photos of our earlier years. The Local 218 has a photo of the building in an earlier time when it was the Hartz Grocery. Does anyone remember that??? The Last Turn Saloon has offered the entire back room's walls for a timeline of Brainerd, including old maps and bird's eye views from the water tower just after its completion. The Brainerd Public Library has many canvas photo frames of old street scenes and more. Northwind Grill has a 6' sketch enlargement of Brainerd as seen in 1888 from the top of the courthouse on 4th & Kingwood, plus a back room full of images. There is some talk of using old street scenes and putting them on light poles so one can see that old scene while viewing the present scene at the same time like a Then & Now...FUN! The CWCHS has spent over a year digitizing their massive collection of old photos. Going a step further, they are accessioning SCANNED photos that they don't have in their possession, that came in from the last 2 years' Brainerd Public Library Photo Scanning Projects, and from walk-ins donated by the public. If the image is known, it is likely available at your local historical society! If you have one you think might interest them, please bring it in!

Here is a list of locations that have “history in the building”, that is likely missing some locations. If you know of more, contact the city and let them know!

Brainerd Historic Art & Photo List

History of the business or building...IN the building!

Many business locations have long been searching out the history and old photos of their business. For the 2014 Brainerd History Week, I went looking for them. Use this list to see some Brainerd art and history in these public spaces. **Create your own tour!** Here is a list of items “spotted” around town. There surely must be more!

Historic Art Tour:

Bill Grange original art prints: Pencil drawings of both depots and the water tower. I need a list, Bill!

Brainerd City Hall: Bronze bust of C. Elmer Anderson, former mayor and our only Brainerdite MN governor!

Bunny Humphrey: 1971 Centennial ceramic trivet mushrooms painting. *Crow Wing County Historical Society.*

Court House: HUGE Sarah Thorpe Heald oil paintings, on different floors.

Crow Wing County Historical Society: Sarah Thorpe Heald & Col. Freeman Thorpe oil paintings. Huge restored 1886 oil portrait of Lyman P. White the “Father of Brainerd”. WPA paintings, many surprises and more.

E.L. Menk: Exterior murals by Kathy Porwall.

Karnowski silk screen prints: Where can these be seen, Charlie?

Paul Bunyan Mural: This huge 1966 Del Rich oil painting used to be at Esser’s Lounge, then later Esser’s Off Sale. This has gone someplace up north, but I don’t know where!

Paul & Babe statue: Built in 1936 reportedly by a hobo artist in exchange for moonshine. This was by the old water tower for years but is waiting to be placed/2015 at the NEW location in the Tyrol hills Shopping Center.

Peggy Bang: Pencil print of 1890’s Parker Electric RR, 1976. *Crow Wing County Historical Society.*

1976 ceramic trivet, “Northern Pacific Depot of the 1890’s”. *Crow Wing County Historical Society.*

Post Office: Brainerd murals by Kathy Porwall.

Rafferty’s Pizza: Many Brainerd murals by Kathy Porwall.

Saint Francis Church: Wonderful oil painting of the first church by local Peggy Bang, photos in the basement.

Totally Kidz: Original laser-cut steel image of the old concrete water tower.

Historic Photo Tour:

612 Station: Formerly the Winnipeg Bar, later Yesterday’s Gone. Great vintage scenes on canvas.

BN Credit Union: Many vintage NPRR photos nicely framed and displayed in the halls, some more recent 1980’s BN photos. Are these also at the CWCHS???

Beebe Optical: Many vintage photos.

Brainerd Fire Hall: Pictorial history of the BFD!

Brainerd Public Library: 1875 Halsted map reprint. 1888 Northwest Magazine panoramic reprint.

CWCHS: Dozens of images, old post cards, and a 5' long 1888 reprint of Brainerd as sketched from the first courthouse. 3 full floors and handicapped accessible. Theme displays and authentic 1917 Sheriff's Residence.

Design Consign: Huge mural photos of what one would have seen through that window c. 1920. These are pasted IN the actual windows, recently discovered! 1933 Baby Face Nelson bank robbery display and artifacts.

Front St. Café: A great display of the business back to 1920, newspaper clippings and photos!

Last Turn Saloon: Timeline of first photos of Brainerd, aerial photos taken in 1920 from the water tower, & maps.

Local 218 Bar: Formerly Chopper's on Mill Ave., lots of great photos, and one of the building as Hartz Store!

Mills Ford, Baxter: Lots of images of old Brainerd, enlarged and displayed.

Northwind Grille: 1888 panoramic reprint, lots of streets and buildings photos in the back room!

NP Center: Old blueprints of the NP Repair Shops and steam engines, photos of the grounds, roundhouse, aerals.

Rafferty's Pizza: Mammoth collection of photos and old advertisements. It's like Brainerd wallpaper!

Saint Francis Church: Great photos of the third and fourth churches, and other old Brainerd photos.

Sawmill Inn: Dozens of logging and lumbering photos, huge enlargements.

US Bank: Old photos, lower level.

2017Q2 History Corner

(April, May, June):

Coming in to spring leads us in to

Brainerd History Week!

The 2017 event is slated for June 12-17, and it is showcasing **Southeast Brainerd**. SE Brainerd includes areas south of the railroad (RR) tracks and east of the old RR grade at 10th St. S. This “town-within-a-town” was a mainstay for hundreds of railroad workers for over a century. It boasted about 8 small grocery stores on Oak St. over the years, the last one in town just closing in 2016...Inward's Grocery at 1401 Oak St., formerly Dandanell's. Take a drive down there and you'll see that at one time the area truly was on the grow. On the SE corner at 13th St. is the former **Bredenberg Grocery** that is quite a major brick building indeed, rivaling those in the greater downtown area. Folks that lived and worked in SE rarely even “went to town”, as they had everything they needed there, including their own school.



In earlier years before the mines started up in the early 1900's in the Crosby area, Oak St. was the “way out of town” to Garrison and Duluth. Hwy. 210, Crosby and Deerwood did not yet exist, so Hwy. 18 was the way east. Just like in other main roads in and out of town, businesses popped up. The area boasted a cedar boat factory and



a mattress factory, and its own fire station. The Northern Pacific Rail Road (NPRR) shops provided employment, its own fire department, water, steam, foundry and electricity. Our first airport was in SE at Rosko Field on the south end of 13th St. We are still looking for ANY info you might have on this almost forgotten enterprise! In about 1910 iron ore mining was started in S. & SE Brainerd, and a spur was run from the NP line to the west. To this day, the street dept. has a hard time keeping blacktop to stay put on the road in the industrial park in that area, do to unstable ground from mining!

Last summer a few fellers from the Twin Cities area were up here several weekends digging in old privies...yep, in old outhouse holes. They are bottle collectors and leave what they don't want for the homeowner. Some of these artifacts have been cleaned and labeled and will be on display here at the museum during Brainerd History Week. You'd be surprised what the refuse thrown down the biffy hole can tell about the occupants of the house! Most common is the medicine bottle, but they also bring up liquor bottles, china, dolls, laundry product bottles and you name it. You'd have to see it to believe it!

Included in this year's **Brainerd History Week** will be a paddling jaunt down the river from Cemetery Landing to Kiwanis Park. This will be part of the city's renewed focus on our wonderful stretch of the Mississippi that flows through our town from well above the dam and Rice Lake, to First Island on the south end of Rotary Park. This upper section that will be visited by canoe and kayak holds many remnants of our early history, none the least of which is the RR bridge, the reason we are here in the first place... "The Crossing" of the river by the NP. Participants will see many islands, and 130-year-old pilings leftover from the logging days. They will paddle past a creek that once sent logs to market, see the locations of the old ferry and steamboat landing, and trading post. The view from the river of the classic 1932 art deco Washington St. Bridge is breathtaking, and it can be enjoyed to the fullest ONLY from this river-level vantage point!

2017 Brainerd History Week early schedule of events.

Times & events subject to change.

Mon., June 12:

10:00 AM: Tour & history discussion at City Hall.

12:00 noon: Tour & history discussion at the Historic Courthouse, S. 4th & Laurel Sts.

2:00 PM-TBA: Downtown Brainerd History Walk, starts at the Brainerd Public Library.

6:00 PM: "Music through the Decades" slide show and music by Laura Busch and Wayne Renn at Tornstrom Auditorium, former Washington High School building.

Tues., June 13:

Time TBA: Brainerd Public Library event.

6:00 PM: Chuck Marohn presents an overview of the development of SE Brainerd, followed by a walking tour.

Wed., June 14:

10:00 AM-2:00 PM: Events at Brainerd Armory, Wright St., South Brainerd.

4:00 PM: Flag Day ceremony.

Thurs., June 15:

1:00 PM: Northern Pacific day, tours beginning at 1:00, more times TBA, at NP Center, formerly the NPRR Repair Shops.

Time TBA: Brew pub event at NP Center's Clock Tower Building, Roundhouse Brewing Co.

6:00 PM: Kayak and canoe rides on the Mississippi; begins at the landing below Evergreen Cemetery, ends at Kiwanis Park.

Fri., June 16:

Time TBA: Centennial celebration of the Crow Wing County Historical Society's building & museum, formerly the CWC Jail & Sheriff's Residence, S. 4th & Laurel Sts.

Sat., June 17:

Children's day, TBA.

-4/4/2017

2017 also will be a **100th birthday** year for one of our classic buildings in town...the former **Crow Wing County Jail and Sheriff's Residence**, now housing the **Crow Wing County Historical Society** since 1983. The building is not only a first-class museum that is fully handicapped accessible, but is the best example of a residence of the day in the city! Most of the fixtures and even some of the furniture are just as they were in 1917! Stop in and take a tour of all 3 floors and see hundreds of exhibits, and don't forget to get a photo of yourself "in jail" in the preserved old jail cell!

Here is a good history roundup on this classic building, from the museum director:

Happy 100th birthday Crow Wing County Historical Society's Museum building!

The "old jail" located next to the historic court house on Laurel Street turns 100 this year! There will be a celebration during Brainerd History Week (June 12 – 17) on Friday, June 16th. Watch for more information to come!

The red brick building was built in 1917 as the third county jail and sheriff's residence. Of the original thirteen cells, eight were located in the area where the first-floor ramps are now. Four cells were located on the second floor: two womens' and two juveniles'; the two womens' cells and a shower were saved during renovation. A padded cell and a men's bathroom was located in the present Baseball Exhibit area on the first floor.

Six sheriffs' and their families lived in the house which is connected on the street side of the building between 1917 and 1962. The first sheriff to live in the house was Claus A. Theorin and the last was Albert J. Krueger, who died while still sheriff. When Charles Warnberg was elected sheriff in 1962, he decided not to move into the house, and the residence then became the sheriff department's offices. The parlor was Sheriff Warnberg's office and the dining room was used as a lunch room. A woman was hired to cook for the prisoners and the kitchen continued to be used to prepare food. At times the hired cook lived in the bedrooms upstairs. The nursery became the detective's office. The sheriff's department moved to the Law Enforcement Center in 1979.

A dedicated crew of volunteers renovated the sheriff's residence and gutted the cell block area. The sheriff's residence was restored first and opened to the public in 1982. The cell block took longer. The renovation for the residence included removing all the plaster, so insulation could be added and the building rewired. The floors were stripped, sanded, varnished and waxed and the walls were repapered with wallpaper similar to the original. The light fixtures throughout the residence are original as is the Persian rug in the parlor. The house was restored to depict a typical upper middle class home of the first decades of the 1900's. The furnishings are not original to any of the sheriff's families; almost everything has been donated by area residents. Through generous donations, grants, and fundraising by area service organizations and individuals, the new museum was completed and formally dedicated on September 12, 1983.

The building is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Crow Wing County owns and maintains the building. The process to start the Crow Wing County Historical Society began in 1923 as the vision of Leon E. Lum, a Brainerd attorney. In 1926 Lum willed \$500 and his handmade desk to begin a County Historical Society. He chose a few prominent citizens to organize the Society. In 1927, the Society was incorporated.

The Society opened a museum on June 16, 1931 in the old courthouse on 4th and Kingwood Streets. Later that year the museum moved to the basement of the new courthouse on Laurel Street and opened on February 6, 1932. The Museum served as the base for the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.) Arts and Crafts Project. After the W.P.A. project ended, the Society was forced to close the Museum from July 1940 to February 1941. It closed again from 1942 to 1945 due to the "black-out", the war focus and a lack of funds and reopened in 1946.

By 1970 the Museum was overflowing with artifacts. Water damage and flooding forced the Museum to close for one year for renovation. Conservation of the collection was nearly impossible in the cramped conditions. About the same time the Society was facing space problems, the County Board announced plans to build a new law

enforcement center and to demolish the sheriff's residence and County Jail for parking space. The Society realized that the building would solve the museum's space problems and lobbied the County Board to preserve the building and to turn it over to the Historical Society. In 1976, the building as a museum was put on the general election ballot. By an overwhelming 82%, the voters told the County Board to turn the building over to the Society to lease.

The Society's Museum, restored sheriff's residence, and the research library are enjoyed by every one of all ages! It is still "the best kept secret". Come check it out—you won't be disappointed. Our hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 am to 3 pm. We are closed major holiday weekends.

-Pamela Nelson, Crow Wing County Historical Society Director



Photos courtesy of the Crow Wing County Historical Society.

Thanks to you folks for preserving our history, since 1927!

-CWF, 4/4/2017

2017Q3 Brainerd City Newsletter:

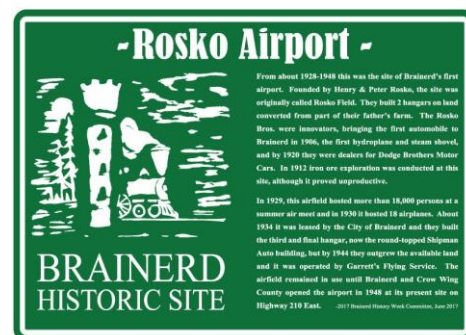
For this segment of **History Corner**, I went and did some walking about in downtown Brainerd looking for changes. Some are obvious yet some are hidden. The MOST obvious is the new signage, called **Then & Now**. This project was designed by Jolene Bradley of the Brainerd Public Library after securing a small block of Legacy Grant funding. The idea was to take an old photo from the late 1880's or even the 1960's, then place it on a foot-square plastic placard in the exact spot the photographer was standing on. The result is pretty cool! See the change right before your eyes! Look for all 40 around town. Use your smart phone's scanner app to let the QR code bring to a [special web page](#) for more info on the photo.



Some buildings are undergoing changes, and the national trend is to bring back the original façade or general period look where possible. A good example of this but this time inside the building is the former Blue Ox Building, earlier Esser's. A few ceilings up they discovered the original ornate tin ceiling, and it was painstakingly restored. An outdoor seating area is planned in the parking lot, kind of a town square-like spot. The former Lyceum Theater, later Coast to Coast Store and now Ye Olde Window has removed the awnings, and the former Greyhound Bus Depot is doing some work on the front.

Another [Brainerd History Week](#) is in the books, and it was a hoot! Judging by the turnouts, it's apparent that folks like tours! There were 3 Downtown tours, one Riverview tour, several N. P. Center tours, and one new and very different one...a Community Historic River Paddle Tour Event! This one was a first...a canoe/kayak paddle, combined with historical notes along the way. It started at Cemetery Landing and went to Kiwanis Park at Boom Lake, and 76 folks in 50 or so boats had a blast! We are hoping it can be an annual event, and perhaps include a separate pontoon jaunt. If you don't paddle, or putt, you can take a virtual tour on your computer here; look for [Putt & Paddle Historic River Tour](#).

An event that left a lasting impression in the form of a **Historic Marker** took place in SE Brainerd at the Shipman Auto building. This was the 3rd and only remaining hangar for Rosko Airport dating to the late 1930's, so we had a presentation from airport historian Mike Peterson, and a tour of the building, followed by the installation of the plaque. Hopefully, this is the first in a series of markers we can install to commemorate some of our most important sites. They are now inexpensive and locally-made. The logo is the same as the series made for our centennial in 1971.



News from the Crow Wing County Historical Society:



The Society is fortunate to have received a donation of two original 1898 Laurel Street Bridge railings. Thanks to social media this historical discovery was made. Through the Facebook group ["Share history and stories about Brainerd Lakes Area"](#) Mike McMillion, amateur historians Carl Faust and Andy Walsh first learned of their existence. They were being used for farm animal pens. Working

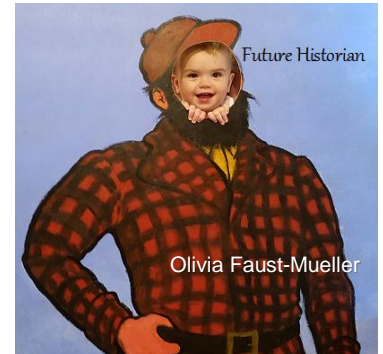


with the County Facilities Manager, Reid Thiesse, with input from Carl Faust and history enthusiasts Jeremy Jackson, Ann M. Nelson and John Van Essen, the plan is to put them on permanent display in front of the museum. We have received generous donations to sandblast and paint the railings. Preserving our area history is important and the railings help to do this!

During **Brainerd History Week**, Carl Faust displayed finds from his adventures in privy digging. Mark Youngblood, outhouse archaeologist from White Bear Lake, gave a presentation to eager listeners pertaining to the art of “privy digging” and collecting the treasures.

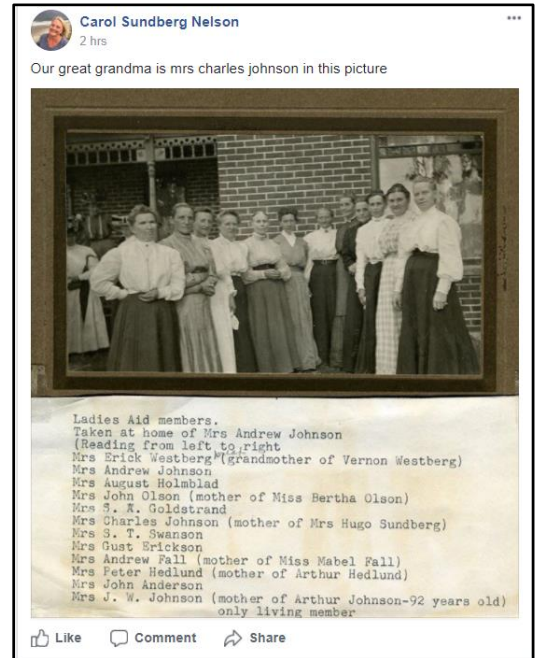
The **baggage cart** that was located outside the museum has been up north in Bemidji being restored by Andy Mack. Andy has restored several baggage carts. The cart will soon arrive back home. Thanks Andy for preserving a little bit of our railroad history!

From the Director, Pam Nelson: “Bring the kids to the museum to have your picture taken with Paul Bunyan. We love kids!”



2017Q4 newsletter-History Corner:

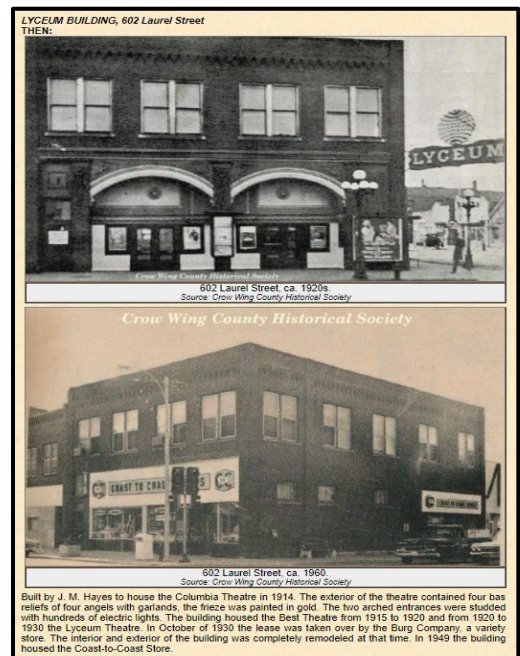
Here is a topic mentioned here before, but now it deserves another. There are several known research tools available these days, some used since Brainerd was formed. Available are court and county land records, property abstracts, maps, tax records, and of course old photos. Most of these are now available online, not to mention the newspapers, so anyone anywhere can be a researcher. However, the hardest source to find and tap is the memories of the folks who lived here and “saw it live”. Stories are often told but seldom written down. Well, the writing has begun by Andy Walsh on Sep. 7, 2015 and it’s in an organized group format. It is free to view for anyone with access to the internet, and to join in on the conversation to post you need only sign up to Facebook and request to become a member of this site. I know, I hear it all the time, “I don’t do Facebook”. Neither did I, but this one site is now one of the best sources of Brainerd “new” old information and photos we have! There is a handy search box so you can just enter a name, or a topic, even a date and see what has been posted by the nearly 9,000 members. Just think, there are that many folks that go to this one site for just ONE reason, **Brainerd area history!** I know of no other format that can bring SO many like-minded people together in one place. The site is carefully monitored by 3 attentive administrators, so ONLY Brainerd area history is allowed to appear. The name of this great site pretty much says it all: [Share History and Stories about Brainerd Lakes Area](#). Give it a try, and be a valuable local history contributor and researcher! Joining Facebook JUST for this one Group is worth it. Just sign up, then visit the site and click “Join Group”. Also consider those that don’t use the internet. Bring this great site to them! Here is just one of the many items posted daily. Do you recognize a face or a name?



Earlier in this series, mentioned was the Brainerd Public Library’s **Then & Now** signs posted around town...40 of them on light and sign poles, so you can see the original view the photographer saw when he made that postcard or photo for a newspaper article way back when. The project is gaining steam and going one step further, so you can see such views without even going outside! Local researcher Ann M. Nelson is building this section as photos come in. Keep posted to the [Crow Wing County Historical Society](#) site for the **Downtown Brainerd Then & Now** section, going live soon! Look in the Special Features section. See a sneak preview to the right.



The [Downtown Brainerd History Walk](#) has been around since 2008. You can check out a booklet at the Brainerd Public Library and start walking, or a CD and listen to it at your leisure. In all that time and the many guided tours given, there are always a few questions that come up, some of which just have no answer...yet. One of the most common is about the empty alcove on the former O’Brien building on the SW corner of the 8th & Laurel Sts. It looks SO lonely completely empty, yet prominently perched in the middle this ominous



building, built as the Montgomery Ward building. Well, again Ann M. Nelson has been busy researching, and believes she has found out what was once in there! The questions would be, where did it go, and why???

She believes it was a statue called the "Progress Lighting the Way for Commerce" which was the symbol/emblem of the Montgomery Ward Company, and most likely it was the statue and not the emblem/medallion.) It was designed by J. Massey Rhind and appeared on many of the chain's stores, and created for the Montgomery Ward Administration Building on Chicago Avenue in 1928 and christened The Spirit of Progress. This theory can be proven by an early photograph! Do you have an old photo of this building, or know of anyone with a street view that might inadvertently include that alcove? Let the search begin! If this is the case, how cool would it be to recreate it and place it back to its original grandeur? This can be done relatively cheaply with new 3-D printer technology.

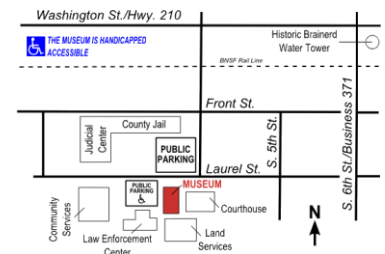


This is from our friends at YOUR local historical society:

Holiday Open House at the Museum!



free admission • open to the public
Friday, December 8th from 3-6 pm.
Bake Sale! Enjoy cookies, coffee and cider.
Free drawing for a door prize! See you there!



What child wouldn't love to play with this miniature replica

of the Maghan home! The original home was built on Crooked Lake around 1905. Robert and Alice Maghan raised their 12 children on the homestead. Lorna Maghan (daughter-in-law) and William Nelson took on the job of building an exact miniature version of the home. It was built using a 3/4 inch to the foot scale, with all of the furnishings being built as near as possible to the original. Items were added as someone remembered a specific item, including a mouse and mousetrap! For the the Maghan family, this model represents cherished memories of the old homestead. This house will be on display for the Holiday Open House! -Sue Duda, Archivist, [Crow Wing County Historical Society](#)

Say what...an OUTDOOR museum???

Part of the duties of a historical society is to collect and preserve artifacts from our area's past. But where does one put a 16' tall concrete vintage light pole, or a 150# section of 1890's granite curbing? How about a large baggage wagon, or a section of NPRR rail from the 1875 bridge collapse? Then there are the 125# 1904 sandstone window sills from the Ransford Hotel! The society has been keeping track of and listing these items, just waiting for a "home" to display them at. The idea of finally rounding them up really got going after that baggage wagon got refurbished and required a rain shelter. It is now in the barn at the fairgrounds, begging to be shown off!





We are hoping to get some movement towards getting our history out there more. “Out there” like the great huge murals in west Little Falls, or the new town square in Crosby. It seems like much physical evidence of history out there in Brainerd has either been torn down or given away. Such items include granite curbs, concrete street light poles, 1887 manhole covers, the M & I caboose at the NPC, the locomotive at Lum Park, the last 6 1898 Laurel St. Bridge railings from Hawkins Drive, and the caboose at the fairgrounds.

So now is the chance to get that baggage wagon covered, AND make a nice display of these outdoor artifacts, all in one place! Reid Thiesse at CWC Facilities has suggested that if funding can be secured, there is a large section of grass in between the LEC, Land Services building and the CWCHS museum, that might be available. There is no place to sit and relax on the grounds in this area, like a gazebo or even a park bench, and this thought has been on their radar. This shelter could provide that. It could also serve as an interpretive center to highlight the county’s connection with Brainerd, and how the county seat wound up here. Our roots are tied to Crow Wing Village, yet there is little on display to explain this connection, and why the NPRR crossed the river here instead of there!



The display items have been secured, and just need to be placed. Some will require mounting in concrete, and some 1880’s Brainerd-made bricks can be used to make plaque pedestals and benches. The grass would be replaced with a pavilion and concrete floor. This will be no small project, and will require the county’s help, however, when done, it could be a first! **Can we do it?**



See, history CAN be fun!

-CWF, 11/9/2017

2018Q1: 2018 BRAINERD HISTORY WEEK TO BE HELD AUG. 9-12

Brainerd History Week will be held August 9-12 and this year's events will focus on the **Mississippi River and West Brainerd**. A preliminary schedule of events includes a community paddle on the river, narrated river history tour and walking tours. "We're very excited to focus on these areas of our community," said Dave Borash, Brainerd History Week Steering Committee Chairperson. "We're also looking for ways to partner with other community events and attractions that may have things going on that week, so please contact us by January 31," said Borash. The complete calendar of events will be released in April. Brainerd History Week was established in 2014 as a way to celebrate the rich history of the community. Events are organized by a volunteer-committee. If you are interested in learning more about the committee, would like to propose an event, or make a contribution, please email: brainerdhistoryweek@gmail.com.

Future themes for Brainerd History Week include Downtown and South Brainerd in 2019. In 2020 the focus will be on the 100th birthday of the Historic Concrete Water Tower, the 150th anniversary of the groundbreaking of the Northern Pacific Railroad, and the selection of the Mississippi River crossing site at the today's railroad bridge location. In 2021 Brainerd will celebrate its sesquicentennial which is the 150th birthday of the City of Brainerd.

The Brainerd History Week (BHW) steering committee includes: David Borash, ISD 181 – committee chairperson, Holly Holm, Brainerd Community Action – committee treasurer, Jeremy Jackson, Brainerd Historian – committee fundraising & co-chair, Julie Jo Larson, CLC, CWCHS and freelance writer – committee secretary, Dave Badeaux, Brainerd City Council, Chris Dens, Brainerd Ski Loons and Brainerd Jaycees, Andrew Hook, VP of the Iron Range Heritage Network, Pam Nelson, Crow Wing County Historical Society Museum, Ashley Storm, Riverfront Committee, and John Van Essen, Evergreen Cemetery Association Board of Trustees. Other volunteers include Mary Devine Johnson, Director, Visit Brainerd, - BHW Marketing and Communications, Carl Faust, Brainerd Historian & Brainerd History Walks - BHW Quality Adviser, Ann Nelson, Brainerd Historian - BHW Booklet Author; and many other volunteers.

Photo from the 2017 [Riverview Brainerd History Walk](#), courtesy of the Brainerd Dispatch.



From your local historical society:

The **Crow Wing County Historical Society** has been keeping tabs on local history since 1927, and the legacy continues. **Executive Director** Pam Nelson has retired after serving the last 10+ years, and has handed the reigns over to Hillary Swanson. We thank Pam for her service and welcome Hillary! There is a LOT going on at the museum in the coming year, both in programs AND remodeling of their wonderful building, the 1917 former Crow Wing County Jail & Sheriff's Residence. (January 21, 2018 [Brainerd Dispatch article](#) by Frank Lee, text reproduced, below)

Crow Wing County historical museum and library renovations to get underway:

Crow Wing County facilities coordinator Rachel Breun (left), Pam Nelson, director of the Crow Wing County Historical Society Museum and Research Library, and Hillary Swanson, future director, talk about the different exhibits at the museum Friday in Brainerd. The museum was recently awarded a \$224,557 grant from the Minnesota Historical Society for some much-needed repairs. (Courtesy Kelly Humphrey / Brainerd Dispatch)

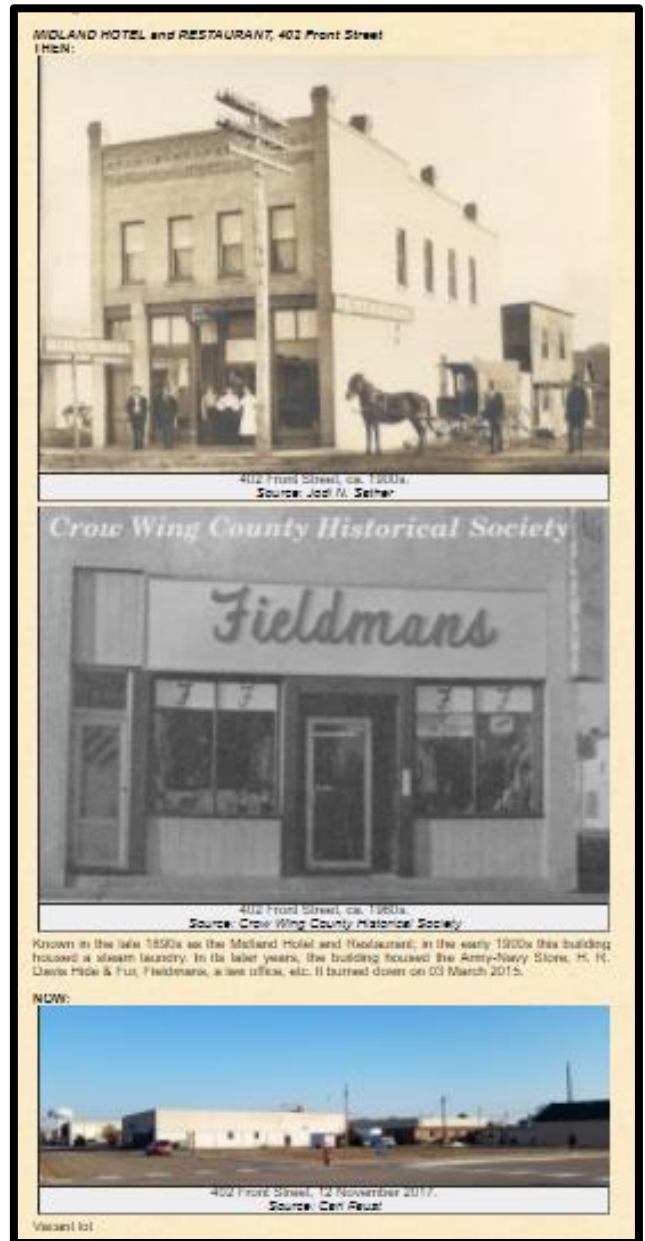


Museum and Library Renovation Project

Congratulations to Crow Wing County for successfully applying for a Legacy Funds Grant to renovate the [Crow Wing County Historical Society Museum](#)! We appreciate their commitment to covering the balance of the total cost of the project from county funds. The text of the announcement is on our [Museum Renovation](#) page, where we will try to keep everyone updated as this project progresses.

Downtown Brainerd - Then & Now

In an attempt to provide a photographic record of the history of downtown Brainerd's buildings through the years, over 285 old and new photos have been gathered by Ann M. Nelson for presentation in a new Special Features page entitled ["Downtown Brainerd: Then & Now"](#). Included in this presentation are short histories of many of the buildings along with exterior and interior photographs where possible. As you scroll through the page, you will notice many changes to Brainerd's buildings, some for the better and some for the worse. Hopefully, more care will be taken of Brainerd's historic downtown in the future. - Ann M. Nelson



A new way to “share” history: The Society has partnered with the [Brainerd Public Library](#) to display some exhibits in their building. February featured a collection of the recent Privy Dig artifacts, and also one on local vintage souvenirs. March will see the transition to a Brainerd Historic Water Tower display. March 10 the library hosted privy digger [Mark Youngblood](#) from St. Paul for a presentation on “outhouse archaeology”. The museum will offer an ongoing display and sale in their store of some of the artifacts from the 2016 and 2017 digs. Most items are a dollar, with a few more rare and unique up to about \$5. Each item, mostly bottles, has been lightly cleaned and labeled with the address of the privy it was found in. Some marked items can be easily dated, and most are well over 100 years old. Stop in and own a piece of history! Proceeds go to museum projects, and they are open 10-3:00 Tues. Sat.



Never a dull moment at the museum! About the time we thought we had seen it all, [Habitat for Humanity](#) called the museum to see if they would like “an unusual item” that was brought in last summer. It looked to be very old, and not many folks had ever seen one before. One gentleman said it was a “shave horse”, or shaving horse, like a sit-on vise to clamp down a piece of wood for shaving with a draw knife. This could be used for shaving cedar shingles, barrel staves or more likely wooden wheel spokes. This item likely came from the area, but we have no clue who donated it!



<<<Have you seen it
before?



2018Q2 History Corner:

Brainerd History Week-2018, Aug. 9-12:

The week is now well set and the events are in place! Some are new and some old favorites will return. Repeating is the Downtown Brainerd History Walk, the Riverview Brainerd History Walk and the tours at the N.P. Center. For its second year, what proved to be SO popular in 2017, the Community Paddle returns and with a twist. Read more about it here, from [Brainerd Community Action](#):

*Please join us for our 2nd Annual **Community Paddle** for Brainerd History Week on Friday, August 10th. We will be launching from the Evergreen Cemetery Access at 5:30 pm and will paddle the beautiful Mississippi River to Kiwanis Park. Not only will you be able to take in some rich history and learn about the river by way of a "guided tour on water" highlighting the historic sites along the route, you will also be helping a great cause. This year we are partnering with [New Pathways](#) to help raise awareness and funds for this wonderful organization that has helped over 600 families by providing shelter and support services to homeless families with children! This event is free to the public for those who have kayaks or canoes (donations to New Pathways will gladly be accepted), and rentals will be available for those who need them. Rental prices are to be determined, and a shuttle service will be available. Please email Ashley at ashley.storm@live.com to sign up!*

Keep posted on events and times on the [Brainerd History Week 2018 Facebook Page](#). Help us fund this continuing and interesting event by buying a raffle ticket!

The fundraiser for Brainerd History Week 2018 is now underway. Please stop by the Crow Wing County Historical Society Museum to pick up your ticket(s) for a chance to win some great prizes! Everyone that purchases a ticket will also receive a copy of this year's history booklet during the August 9th-12th Brainerd History Week 2018 schedule of events. Tickets are only \$10, and your donation is tax deductible.

Brainerd History Week Aug. 9-12, 2018	
Proceeds go to this organization. Thank you for your support!	

Name	No. 151

Phone	
No. 151	

Brainerd History Week Aug. 9-12, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Visit Brainerd Package: One night stay in waterpark, (4) waterpark passes, \$50 Rafferty's gift card. (\$300 value)• BIR: (2) Superweek passes for 2018 Muscle Car Shootout on Labor Day weekend. (\$170 value)• Paul Bunyan Land: (4) Amusement Center passes. (\$87.80 value)• Grand Casino Mille Lacs: 1-night stay in a Standard Room & \$30 off any food venue. Expires 12-30-18. (\$56+ value)• Grand Casino Mille Lacs: 1-night stay in a Standard Room & \$30 off any food venue. Expires 12-30-18. (\$56+ value)• Roundhouse Brewery Gift Pack: Growler, (2) mugs & \$12 gift card.	No. 151
		\$10

If you are a regular reader of the History Corner, you may have been following this project that started in [Nov. of 2015](#)! The city of Brainerd has agreed to install 2 of the railings and one plaque by the Laurel St. Bridge, and we are getting closer to installing 2 railings plus a plaque in front of the Crow Wing County Historical Society museum. Here is an update as of 2018/5/29, as posted on the [Brainerd Share History Facebook page](#): This could finally be it! The 3 plaques have been brought to the sandblaster/powder coater. They are in need of a good painter to highlight the raised wording. This will not be too difficult, a detail roller may work, but may be a bit time-consuming, so I'm looking for a volunteer. I think a quart of any good Rustoleum-type gloss black will do.

Can you help? The railings have been delivered to the welder to get straightened and readied for painting. [Follow this project](#) on Andy Walsh's great Share Brainerd History Facebook page! Here is the first finished product, waiting for the relief to get painted:



The Brainerd Public Library has concluded its Water Tower exhibit, and will now display some of the 40+ paintings that were produced during the program in select locations around town. Check them out, while you're finding the recent activity in Downtown Brainerd! You will find facelifts in the way of a return to the original facades, a new Mexican restaurant and a nice bar & restaurant with an outside dining patio. Another restaurant is working on an expansion to an adjoining building.

Here is a photo of the 1923 Koop building, formerly JC Penny's then Gambles, facade restoration. It is nearly complete now, but this photo shows a bit of what it was and what it will become!



-CWF, 6/2/2018

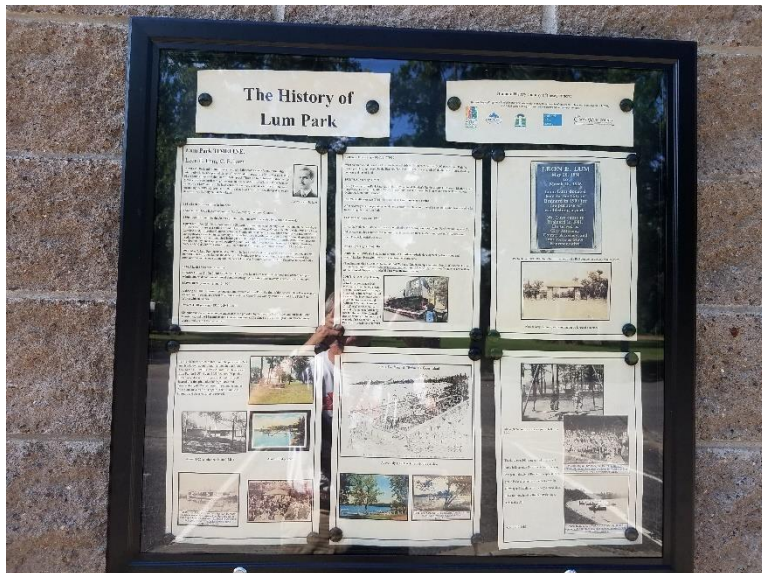
August 11 was a beautiful day for the 2018 Evergreen Cemetery History Walk. Thirty-three participants were split into two groups led by Evergreen Board Trustees Duane Blanck and John Van Essen and primarily visited the resting places of WW I veterans and nurses.



The day also included a first, a **Community Bike Ride** from Brainerd to Crow Wing State Park, where riders and other visitors enjoyed a historical presentation at the Beaulieu House, and the 150th Anniversary of Chief Hole-in-the-Day.

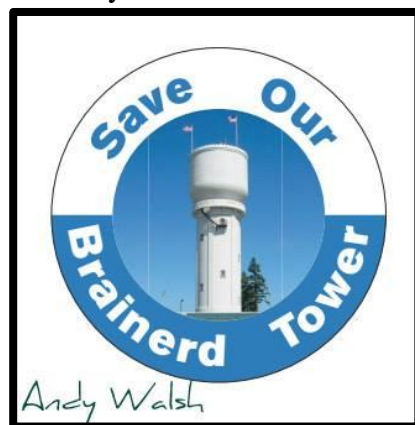
Sunday was the wrap-up at Lum Park and started in the old WPA fire pit

that is now in need of restoration. A short tour of historical sites included the old ice plant and the 1909 marker embedded in a huge boulder. Also, there was an unveiling of a **History of Lum Park** kiosk that was made possible by the Brainerd Public Library and Legacy Grant funding. Stop by and see the history of the park, well, IN the park. It is located in the same place as the other two in Gregory Park and Kiwanis Park, on the restroom building. The Brainerd Ski Loons wrapped up the day with another great performance. At the intermission, the Brainerd History Week raffle ticket winners were drawn. So you see, it was a fun time, but even if you missed the events, left behind was more for others to see in years to come.



Murals! A new “Community Coloring Book” is being painted in the alley on a HUGE wall on the north side of Laurel St. between 7th & 8th Sts.! You simply have to stop by and take a look. It’s hard to believe, but we could not find evidence of a mural being painted in downtown Brainerd since 1975, so now, THAT’S history!

You can hardly help but notice there is a fervent push to see if the **historic concrete water tower** can be saved. A committee is being formed, but even before that, fundraising had begun at the fair, and later in the form of button sales. You can buy this button for \$5 at the **Crow Wing County Historical Society**.



Did you know there is now an event space in downtown Brainerd, and it is in a 1923 restored building called the Koop Block, built in 1923? Well, there is, on the NE corner of 7th & Laurel Sts., and you just must go see the **fully restored tin ceiling**. History just seems to be reappearing in downtown Brainerd! From their Rumbly Hall website: “Historic Downtown Event Space. This lovingly restored space is perfect for weddings, conferences, meetings, gatherings of all types”. Incidentally, the former S & L building to its north is also being restored, complete with windows...for...WINDOW SHOPPING! Now here is ANOTHER drive you need to make! You may not recognize the downtown, or you may recall its look of yesteryear.

-CWF, 9/2018

History is here, and still being made, in Brainerd, Minnesota!