

## Manitowoc County Historical Society

# *Diamond Anniversary Issue*

Seventy-five years of historical collection,  
preservation and publishing.

by: Edward Ehlert

### INTRODUCTION

If we had made a list of the organizations that existed in Manitowoc County in 1906, it likely would have been of some length. The newspapers of that year report that there were a considerable number. Some were church organizations, some were of political nature, some were social, and others had to do with the arts. There were choruses and orchestras, and there were some that featured physical development, chiefly of the male members. One of the organizations that came into being that year was the Manitowoc County Historical Society.

As one would study the names of the organizations, one would notice that some exist to this day, others have been long ago forgotten. Among those that have survived, and have had a record of accomplishment and growth is the Manitowoc County Historical Society.

In 1906 Manitowoc already was a community that was seventy years old. It was a community that was a mixture of several ethnic groups. There were those of German descent, Norwegian, Bohemian, Polish, Irish, some Swedes and of Danish background and also some who were of a Jewish background.

Each of the ethnic groups had their people of prominence, with some

making significant contributions toward the growth and development of the community. Some were leaders in industry, some in the political, educational, and religious life of the community. And many were just ordinary people, law abiding and wanting only the opportunity to earn a livelihood and to live quiet and peaceable lives.

Many of the early settlers in Manitowoc had left their European communities in pursuit of values which their European heritage had denied them. Some sought religious freedom, others sought an opportunity to pursue occupations and trades which were denied them, others sought a place where military service was not a constant threat and obligation, and some others might just have had a wanderlust, and to discover for themselves whether the reports of "that there was gold in them there hills" was true or false.

When they set foot on Manitowoc soil, many saw in this area a land where there was opportunity to achieve all that one might wish for. They had a vision of what the area might become if people were willing to work hard, and with a spirit to conquer any obstacle that might make its appearance. Obviously there was a resolute spirit among many of them. Thus the

Manitowoc community had flourished, and had grown from a village to a city in 1872. Its harbor had brought many ships to its wharves, and shipbuilding was a flourishing industry. Railroads had come, and in general it seemed like this might become one of the Wisconsin's most progressive communities. Everything about the area seemed to reflect the fact that there were ingenuous and resourceful people who had called this part of northeastern Wisconsin their home. As those who founded the Manitowoc County Historical Society perceived, these were a people who had a rich heritage, one which deserved to have its struggles, its accomplishments, its successes and its failure recorded in print, in records which were evidence of goals having been achieved, and in accounts which reflected that the "paradise" which was described to them when they still were in Europe, indeed was here on the west shore of Lake Michigan. That was the object that the founders of the Manitowoc County Historical Society had in 1906. What follows should indicate how well they accomplished the objectives and goals that they had when they organized as a Society to "record, preserve, and collect and publish" the story of what we have become as a Wisconsin community.

### THE STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF WISCONSIN

The need for an organization whose responsibility it would be to record, collect and preserve evidences of past years became apparent soon after Wisconsin became a state in the U.S.A. Wisconsin had been a part of the Territory of Michigan for a number of years, and before that the French explorers and missionaries were frequent visitors to Wisconsin with Green Bay as the location where they

first set foot on this territory. To be able to write the history of our state, the Wisconsin Historical Society was organized by state mandate. During the first fifty years the activities of the organization took place in an office set up at Madison, perhaps in connection with the University of Wisconsin. The year when the Wisconsin Historical Society began its work was about 1850.

that was the last of the meetings of that organization that were held. If there were other meetings there is no record of them.

During the late years of the nineteenth century there were communities in Wisconsin which felt that if the history of their local community was to be "recorded, collected, and preserved," it would be advantageous to organize local societies. Thus local history societies were organized at Green Bay and Ripon in the years shortly before 1900. Walworth County asked to become an affiliate of the State Society in 1904, Sauk County in 1905, and Superior (organized locally in 1902), Manitowoc, and Waukesha Counties in 1906.

### Organization of the Manitowoc County Historical Society

As early as 1879 an effort was made to organize an "Old-Timer's Society" which would have the purpose of "to keep alive the spirit of the early days."

It appears that a club was actually organized and a banquet was held, speeches made, and action taken to get the organization on its way. However,

It was in January 1906 that about a dozen of Manitowoc County men met to consider the organization of a County Historical Society. Leaders in this effort were Judge Emil Baensch, Ralph G. Plumb & Fred Christensen. These men were joined by about eight or nine others and they unanimously agreed that an organization of this

## THE BEGINNINGS

While Ralph Plumb in the article published in the Wisconsin Magazine of History related in a general way facts about the organization of the Manitowoc County Historical Society, the records contain details that are of interest even now. Thus, we shall here relate these details in this record of seventy-five years of history of the Society

For an organization to begin, the services of a highly respected man in a community are needed. Judge Emil Baensch was that kind of man. He had been prominent in city and county politics since the mid 1880's, had served as a Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin, and had been active in the efforts of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin to preserve and encourage the recording of happenings in the lives of people, especially those of German descent. Following his tenure at Madison he returned to Manitowoc and was elected a county judge, a position which he continued to hold at the time when he initiated the idea of organizing a county historical society in Manitowoc.

Judge Baensch was of German descent, and since Manitowoc had attracted a number of German immigrants to its shores, he felt that the achievements of his ancestors ought not to go unnoticed, thus his interest in an organization that would have as its object the recording, preserving and publishing of the history of the community. There were others who were like-minded in their feeling, and so on January 13, 1906, "in the training school room," on the second floor of the Carnegie Public Library on North 8th and Chicago Streets in Manitowoc, a meeting was held to organize the Manitowoc County Historical Society.

There were twelve persons present at this meeting. Judge Anderson made a motion that Judge Emil Baensch act as chairman, and Ralph G. Plumb (then twenty-five years of age, and who had joined the Plumb Nelson Company about three years before) was elected secretary. It was then moved that "the model of corporate articles as approved by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin be approved and adopted as the form of the Manitowoc County Historical Society." Incidentally, that was the name that was given the organization in that meeting, and by which name it has been known in all of

kind was a vital community need. An application for a charter was made to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin, and was approved on January 15, 1906. Details concerning the organization are given in an article written by Ralph G. Plumb, and published in the Wisconsin Magazine of History, the September 1949 issue.

the years since. Finally, a fourth motion was made that a meeting be called "for the permanent organization, the same to be held on the first Saturday in February at the Manitowoc City Library."

On February 3, 1906 there was discussion concerning the constitution and by-laws. A membership fee of one dollar was established. Meetings were to be held in alternate months except during June, July and August, with the annual meeting to be held the last Tuesday in January. The Wisconsin Blue Book was to be the authority to be used in matters of parliamentary procedure. (Most organizations use Robert's Rules of Order in such matters.) Signing the constitution and by-laws were:

Judge Emil Baensch  
H. P. Hamilton, Two Rivers  
Dr. L. Falge, Reedsville  
Ralph G. Plumb  
John Schuette  
J. S. Anderson  
W. F. Nash, Two Rivers  
Fred Christensen  
Dr. W. G. Kemper

There are no records of any meetings having been held until the annual meeting of January 29, 1907. At that meeting the treasurer reported a balance on hand of \$1.35. Admitted to membership were Ferdinand Ostenfeldt, Edward L. Kelley, and Rev. Oliver C. Johnson.

It was moved that typewritten copies of all addresses delivered at Historical Society meetings be bound and filed in the Manitowoc City Library. It was also decided "to undertake the preservation of the local marine history by means of a meeting called of all old local lake captains and marine men." It was also moved that meetings be held in February and March and then there was to be adjournment until after the summer season.

Although there are no known minutes of any meetings held between 1907 and 1935, it is known that there was much action in preserving the history of Manitowoc County. Sometime after 1911, for example, there was published two volumes known as "The History of Manitowoc County" with the following listed on the Editorial Committee:

Dr. Louis Falge,  
Editor-in chief

### Associate Editors:

William J. Peil  
Emil Baensch  
John Chloupek  
J. S. Anderson  
R. G. Plumb  
Thomas E. Torrison  
(above from Manitowoc)  
Gus. C. Kirst  
H. P. Hamilton  
Arthur H. Lohman  
(above from Two Rivers)  
A. W. Dassler, (Kiel)

In the preface of Volume I the names of Prof. C. W. Meisnest, John Schuette, H. C. Wilke, Dr. G. C. Wellner, Miss Johanna Lups, and Captain Timothy Kelley are credited also with having made significant contributions. Volume I has twenty-two chapters with every aspect of community life in the 19th century being reported beginning with the Indians.

Volume II of Falge's History of Manitowoc County has the same list of persons as the Editorial staff. The volume contains biographical sketches and many pictures of pioneer citizens. There are 667 pages in this book. These volumes to this day are regarded as the most authoritative accounts of the history of Manitowoc County up to 1911. The Manitowoc County Genealogical Society some years ago added an Index to Volume I and published a second printing. There was a complete sell-out of the second printing of these volumes in a matter of months.

In the Wisconsin room of our Manitowoc Public Library there are books relating to the life stories of some pioneer residents. An example of one of these is "John and Rose", by John Schuette. On one of the first pages of a copy of this book there is this handwritten notation, "1884-1914 — the Thirtieth Anniversary of the Manitowoc Savings Bank, organized on April 7, 1884, the book "John and Rose" is presented with the compliments of John Schuette, president; Louis Schuette, vice-president; Edwin S. Schuette, cashier; and Henry Detjen, assistant cashier. No doubt there are many other books like this one, indicating that there were many in the Manitowoc County community who felt that the records of the life and times of the pioneer residents of the county should be preserved.

That the motion adopted in the January 29, 1907 meeting was carried out is attested to by a number of booklets containing the printed speeches given by persons prominent in the Society membership in those years. These little pamphlets indicate that the authors did painstaking and extensive research as they prepared the addresses which they gave at Society meetings, and their

interpretations of historic events in our local history indicated a perceptive spirit which is very helpful to readers of local history even in this period of history.

While we cannot relate happenings between 1906 and 1935 because of an absence in the files of official records, we are very sure that these were busy years for the Society. The men who served in official capacities are the kind of persons of whom we would expect progress in many areas of local

## **The Manitowoc County Historical Society**

*By Ralph G. Plumb*

*This article was published in the Wisconsin Magazine of History —  
September 1949; pages 40-44*

One of Manitowoc's leading citizens, Judge Emil Baensch who had served as Wisconsin's lieutenant governor had always taken an active interest in historical matters and was soon to be elected as curator of the State Society. He had done much work in tracing the ancestry of German Americans, and in 1906 urged the formation of a county historical group. As an attorney he saw to it that upon organization the Manitowoc County Historical Society was incorporated, and thus its career of usefulness was started.

Among the organizers were the following: Judge Baensch, who became president, and Ralph G. Plumb, secretary; John Schuette, the leading banker in town; J. S. Anderson, an attorney; Fred Christiansen, county superintendent; Dr. W. G. Kemper, mayor at about this time; W. F. Nash, a Two Rivers editor; and Dr. Louis Falge, an indefatigable collector of Indian relics, who later became the author of a history of Manitowoc County.

history. To speculate as to what might have happened is not in keeping of one who writes historical reports, thus we leave this chapter to future research workers and authors of history. We would add only one additional sentence to this chapter by listing those who served as president of the Society during those years. The list follows: Judge Emil Baensch, 1906-1914; Ralph Plumb, 1914-1934; and Earl Tower, 1934-1935.

Meetings were held at the call of the president, and many interesting programs were given. Memorable was the presentation to the Society of the flag of Company A Fifth Wisconsin Infantry by Judge J. S. Anderson that had been borne through the early days of the Civil War until captured by a South Carolina regiment. A local judge visited the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876, came in contact with the southerners who had the flag, and recovered and brought it to Manitowoc. The symbol, the handiwork of Manitowoc women in the spring of 1861, had been given to Captain Temple Clark at a gathering in Union Park in April of that year. The surviving members of the G.A.R. were guests and listened to Judge Anderson's address. The flag now holds an honored place in the Society's museum war room.

Lake history was discussed by such veteran skippers as Captains Edward Carus and Timothy Kelley. Early

politics was the subject of an evening study led by the secretary. The first public gathering sponsored by the Society was the dedication of the monument to Chief Mexico (Waumegesako) held at the first county seat, Manitowoc Rapids, on Sunday, August 8, 1909. The little village was crowded with visitors when the memorial was dedicated, the gift of a local marble dealer, Nic. Kettenhoffen. The meeting was presided over by Judge Baensch; the statue was presented on behalf of the donor by the secretary and received on behalf of the township by the chairman, Emil Vetting, and on behalf of the school district by E. S. Bedell. President Otto Habegger of the Wisconsin Archeological Society delivered a short address, and then Secretary Reuben G. Thwaites of the *State Historical Society* gave one of his usual happy talks. The statue, 18 by 18 feet, with a copper plate attached, had inscribed upon it the old chief's name and the words, "Peace and Friendship." This memorial is a tribute to a friend of the white man, to the chief who had signed the treaties of Butte des Morts, 1827, Green Bay, 1828, Prairie du Chien, 1829 and Chicago, 1833. He died in 1844, aged about fifty-five years. His son, Benjamin Y. Mexico, was unable to be present, but arrived some days later and was entertained by the members of the Society. However, in the gathering that Sunday was one person who had known the old chief, Harvey F. Hubbard.

Serving as vice-president of the county Society was Henry P. Hamilton of Two Rivers, whose magnificent collection of Indian coppers and



### **Judge Emil Baensch**

*Judge Emil Baensch was one of nine men who signed the Constitution and by-laws for the Manitowoc County Historical Society on January 15, 1906. He was the first president of the Society and served in that office until 1914. Mr. Baensch was born of German parentage in Manitowoc in 1857. A detailed biography of him is contained in Falge's "History of Manitowoc County" Volume 2 (pages 32-36). He attended the University of Wisconsin Law School and was admitted to the bar in 1882, specializing in probate law. He became a county judge in 1888. During these years he was also publisher of a newspaper known as the Manitowoc Post. He was a captain of the Wisconsin National Guard from 1883 through 1888. In 1894 he was elected Lieutenant Governor of Wisconsin, and was re-elected in 1896. He was a candidate for the office of U.S. Senator on two occasions. In 1909 he was one of the founders of East Wisconsin Trust Company.*

implements was destined finally to repose at the Historical Museum at Madison. When the State Archeological Society met in conjunction with the local members of the County Historical Society in 1912, a pilgrimage to Two Rivers was made to inspect this collection. At this time the principal address was delivered by Dr. Kinsman of Benton Harbor, then recognized as a national authority on prehistoric remains.

During these earlier years addresses of interest were delivered at regular meetings of the local group by John Schuette, who dealt with early civic movements; Dr. Falge, who talked on early medical experiences and also on Indian relics; by Henry Mulholland, who spoke of the early days in the Irish settlement in the town of Meeme; and by J. S. Anderson of the G.A.R., who told of his visit at Gettysburg and of the experiences of the Manitowoc boys in that battle.

After some years Judge Baensch relinquished the presidency, and the group chose Secretary R. G. Plumb to preside with Harry F. Kelley as secretary. It was about this time that the marker was erected, and a dedication ceremony observed one Sunday afternoon at Jambau Creek, in the township of Gibson, the site of the earliest French trading post of Jacques Vieau, supposedly erected in 1795. The Society also participated in the erection of a monument in the courthouse grounds commemorating the deeds of General Frederick Salomon and his two officer brothers. Then, too, the seventy-fifth anniversary of the first meeting of the county board was held in 1923 at the old courthouse grounds at the Rapids, with addresses by Judge Baensch and A. J. Schmitz, onetime candidate for governor on the Democratic ticket and a former resident of Manitowoc.

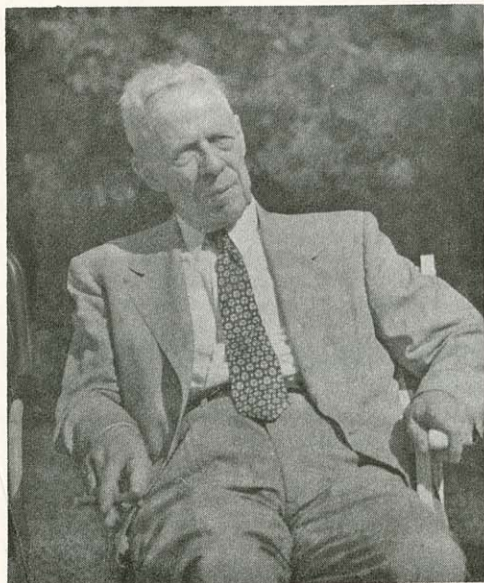
There was a period of inactivity for a year or two, after which Earl Tower was chosen president and served till his removal from the city. In the meantime John G. Johnson had taken an interest under the auspices of the Knights of Pythias in erecting historical markers in the city commemorating the deeds of prominent early settlers, such as Colonel K. K. Jones, on the site of the free library he had founded; John Schuette, the pioneer banker, at Schuette Park; Henry Stolze, the mayor who had accomplished the purchase of public utilities; William Rahr, also onetime mayor and leading industrialist, and others. This work naturally led to Mr. Johnson's election in 1935 to the president's chair in the Society, an office to which he has devoted endless effort and which he has occupied ever since.

There had been gathered a few museum items in a small room in the second story of the city library; under his guidance this was increased until the entire second floor was occupied. More material was offered and collected throughout the county by his constant labors and it was a happy circumstance that prompted Mrs. Reinhardt Rahr to offer commodious residence on North Eighth Street. This was opened up in the early forties, and during the war was shared with the Red Cross. With the assistance of Captain Ed Carus, Edwin Schuette, and other marine-minded individuals the exhibit of historical maritime items occupied five rooms. It is pronounced by those qualified to judge as one of the best west of Cleveland. A war room was set aside, and the remaining rooms in the three-story building utilized for other exhibits which were properly catalogued and classified.

The activity of the Society, however, was not confined to the museum in

these later years. President Johnson continued his effort to have markers placed at various points in the county, particularly at the site of the early courthouse at Rapids. He was associated also in the erection of the monument to the editor and educator, John Nagle, at the dedication of which the orator was none other than Senator Walsh of Montana, a former student of the man honored. On May 5, 1936, citizens gathered as guests of the Society and of the Daughters of the American Revolution at the foot of North Seventh Street to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of the landing of the first settlers who built their little shack at that exact point. Four years later the Society held another meeting at the same place to unveil a large stone boulder to permanently mark the spot. The year 1936 also marked the larger undertakings of centenary observance. President Johnson had charge of the civic committee which planned the pageant held at the county fairgrounds and the parade, the water carnival, and other events which were witnessed by many thousands. At the Rapids the residents again congregated to have their own celebration, and were addressed by Judge E. S. Schmitz, and others. Not long afterwards the Society placed plaques in both Union and Washington Parks commemorating the original gifts of the land by Benjamin Jones, the founder of Manitowoc, the ceremony taking place on the morning of the Fourth of July.

At the annual meeting at the museum in 1944 and 1945 the matter of inviting the State Society to hold its annual gathering at Manitowoc was broached. Because of war conditions this was postponed until 1947 when the invitation was accepted and the August meeting, with its varied and memorable features, was the result. It



### **Ralph G. Plumb**

*Ralph G. Plumb was born in Manitowoc on January 17, 1881. He was the only child of his parents and obtained his early education in the Manitowoc Public Schools, graduating from the northside high school in 1897. He attended the University of Wisconsin and was graduated in 1902. As a graduate of the law school he was admitted to the bar in 1902. However, he never became a practicing attorney; instead he entered the service of Plumb and Nelson Co., wholesale grocers, and continued in the service of that company until his retirement.*

*From the time of his return to Manitowoc in 1902 he became active in literary circles, publishing in 1902 "The History of Manitowoc County", a book of 316 pages. In 1911 he was the author of "The History of Navigation of the Great Lakes" and in 1930, "Badger Politics, 1836-1930". He was one of the founders of the Manitowoc County Historical Society in 1906, was elected as its first secretary, served in that office until 1914 when he succeeded Judge Emil Baensch as the president. He served as president of the Society until 1934, and rosters of officers in succeeding years list him as one of the "Advisors" through 1950. He retained his great interest in the Manitowoc County Historical Society and in 1974 was given the Society's Distinguished Service Award at its annual meeting. See pages 252-255 in "Falge's History of Manitowoc County" for a biography of this distinguished member of our Society through 70 years of its history.*

so happened that it coincided with a hundred years of progress in the shipbuilding and malting industries in the community, and President Johnson had proposed that this be made a civic observance. This was carried out with Albert E. Cole as chairman.

During the years of the presidency of Mr. Johnson the secretaryship was held by Perc Brandt and then by Miss Elsa L. Dramm. An advisory committee consisting of Judge Albert Schmidt, Harry F. Kelly, and R. G. Plumb has also been active with the honorary vice-presidents from various

## The Period From 1935 Through 1940

In this period there were financial records containing information about membership in the Society, and also minutes of meetings that were held. These represent the source material for the record of happenings in these years.

### 1935

Ralph Plumb had been president of the Society from 1914 through 1934. He was then succeeded by Earl Tower who served for about a year. However, his employment required that he move to another city, thus he was succeeded by John G. Johnson, then an enterprising young businessman in the community, and a community leader.

1935 was the year when written records became available of Society happenings. A quarterly meeting was held at the Manitowoc City Library in the second floor meeting room. Thirty-four persons were present. At this meeting John G. Johnson was elected president, and Perc Brandt became the secretary-treasurer. Marine matters were discussed with Captain Carus, Edwin Schuette and Herbert Pitz having displays and pictures to illustrate their remarks.

villages throughout the county serving on the board. Henry C. Wilke, a Two Rivers banker, has held the office of vice-president through most of the recent years.

Thus during the course of a half century the Manitowoc County Historical Society has been a leader in bringing about most of the civic movements commemorating the past and has been an active participant in all of them. All through the years the Society has been building up its museum and receiving in this and in its other activities the active cooperation of the State Society.

Another meeting was held on November 26 with 34 persons present. It was another "marine night" with Hans Ertz the guest speaker. He emphasized shipbuilding and marine shipping. Listed among those present at that meeting was Anton Witt, Sr., the father of the Witt family who have been so very active in Society affairs during the 1970's and 1980's.

### 1936

Benjamin Jones was the first white man to locate in Manitowoc in 1836. He had been a Chicago merchant who had purchased from the Green Bay Land Office of the U.S. government 2,000 acres of land, most of it south of the Manitowoc River along Lake Michigan. His acreage went westward to about the present west city limits. Since 1936 was the Centennial year of Manitowoc, in the January meeting there was recognition of the fact that we were a community having one hundred years of history. The American Legion had representatives present at that meeting, and they urged that the two organizations jointly sponsor a Manitowoc Centennial celebration. In another

meeting held on January 27, 1936 an attempt was made to encourage involvement by other organizations including the service clubs. An appeal was made to the City Council to give financial support of this project. While the City Council gave its support in a number of ways, the financial support of the celebration remained the responsibility of the various sponsoring organizations.

The records show that there were 66 persons who were members of the Society in that year. Among those listed was Harvey Stangel who has been an active member ever since.

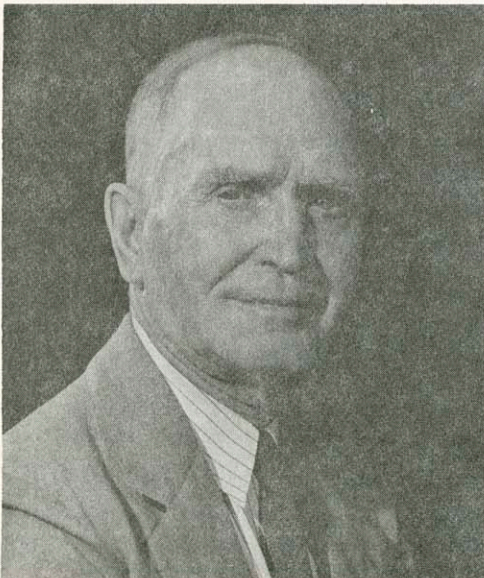
In the January meeting there was great interest shown in locating buildings that were constructed in the years preceding 1840. Two homes were specifically mentioned in the minutes, one owned by a Mr. Melendy and the other was the Crocker home. Mr. Melendy was prominent as the owner of a photographic studio. As for homes about the county which were built in the 1840 period and before, the trading post at Jambo Creek, built by Jacques Vieau was credited with being the oldest home to be built by a white man in the county. He built a fur trading post at Manitowoc Rapids about 1800 also.

The Manitowoc Herald-Times had a special centennial edition. It still represents a very fruitful source of information relating to the history of the 1836-1936 era.

A letter to prospective members indicated that the Society had received and had in storage about 1800+ artifacts. There was reference in the minutes of trying to find a location where a museum could be set up.

Oscar Richter became the first known life member of the Society. The fee paid is not known.

To finance the Centennial celebration Centennial buttons were



**John G. Johnson**  
President, 1935-1950

*John G. Johnson before 1900 played the outfield in the Manitowoc baseball team. He was active in the business community of the early years of the century, being president of the Merchant's Association for a time. He was the founder of the J. G. Johnson Company, engaged in the sale of wood, coal and ice. Later the company was known as the Spindler Company. He was active in the Boy Scouts and also in the Salvation Army.*

*During the years of his presidency of the Historical Society he promoted the erection of nineteen historical markers in the city. He was chairman of the 1936 Centennial Committee, a member of the Public Library Board and was the 6th ward Supervisor for a time. During the 1940's he set up the museum located in the present Rahr-West Civic Center and Museum.*

*When he retired from the office of president in 1950, Judge H. H. Schmidt said, "This historical museum has been an object of affection close of Mr. Johnson's heart, and the people of the county, whether they realize it or not, will ever hereafter be debtors to John G. Johnson for his unselfish, untiring industry, singleness of purpose, and his respectful but nevertheless fearless and vigorous acceptance of the call to the struggle for his idea of what the museum should be."*

sold at \$1.00 each. Centennial programs were held from June 28 through July 5 with most of the programs being held at the Manitowoc County Fair grounds then located at N. 18th and New York Avenue, in what is now known as Citizen's Park.

### 1937-1940

The years from 1937 through 1940 are completely devoid of any minutes which indicated the kind of activity that the Society pursued. The fact that there were 83 members in 1938 indicates that there must have been substantial interest in the Society. Art Stangel's name appeared on the membership list in 1937, and in 1938 these were added: Junias Pleuss, Harvey Strouf, and Guido Rahr. It seems that there was membership attrition in 1939 and also in 1940.

## 1941 through 1950

### 1941

In a special meeting of the Society on October 18, 1941 the following officers were elected:

President . . . . . John G. Johnson  
Sec'y-Treas. . . . . Perc Brandt  
1st Vice-Pres. . . . . H. C. Wilke  
  Two Rivers  
2nd Vice-Pres. . . Rev. F. C. St. Clair  
3rd Vice-Pres. . . . . Francis Kadow  
Advisors: Ralph G. Plumb  
              Harry F. Kelley  
              Judge A. H. Schmidt

It was at this meeting that announcement was made of a gift to the City of Manitowoc by Mrs. Reinhart Rahr, who at that time resided in California, of her home located at 610 N. 8th Street. The Manitowoc County Historical Society was involved in the transaction as a result of the need for a quasi-public organization to take care of certain legal stipulations that were involved in the transfer of the title. As a result of this involvement the articles of agreement stipulated that "the grounds and building are to be made available for use by the Manitowoc County Historical Society and its museum, and are to be used for other educational and civic purposes and the property is to be known as the Rahr Civic Center."

### 1942

In the meeting held on January 27, 1942, a resolution was unanimously passed in which formal acceptance of the Rahr Civic Center was agreed to, subject to conditions described in the original document.

In the same meeting of the Society (Oct. 18, 1941) there was acceptance of a revised Constitution and by-laws. One of the new stipulations was that a life membership in the Society could be obtained on payment of \$15.00. In the same meeting Elsa Dramm was elected secretary-treasurer. It was further

announced that the Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors had appropriated the sum of \$150 to help defray the costs of operating the Society. It was about two years earlier that the laws of the State of Wisconsin had given counties the right to make appropriations of that kind.

### 1943

In 1943 there was an amendment to the by-laws by which ten vice-presidents were to be elected, with each of the officials representing a certain area of the county. The minutes reflect that this amendment was never fully consummated. Certain areas of the county never were able to name a person to represent their area.

In 1943 these were the vice-presidents who were named: Henry Wilke, Two Rivers; Francis Kadow, Manitowoc; William Pflueger, Manitowoc; Rev. Thomas Windiate, Manitowoc; and Ernest G. Phipps, Valders.

### 1944

The minutes of 1944 indicate that the Society received WPA help to aid in the preservation of certain records. The minutes further reflect that a museum had been set up at the Rahr Civic Center, and from Sept. 1942 through Sept. 1943, 8,424 persons had visited the museum. In 1944 the county appropriation was increased to \$300.

The efforts of the Society in 1944 were involved in acquisition of the entire block of the site of the first courthouse and jail in Manitowoc Rapids. Some years earlier Highway 141 had cut through the property which actually was the site of the courthouse. Thus, the county acquired acreage to the east to make up for what was lost for highway purposes.

### 1945

The records indicate that during 1945 the museum was open to visitors on three days of each week from 2 to 5 p.m. and on Friday from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. The museum was open on Sunday from 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. 4,000 items were on display. The marine displays were characterized as outstanding. Attendance at the museum during the year was 5,265; however, it was stated that many failed to sign the guest register.

It appears that the Society in 1945 had located 36 different historic places in Manitowoc County, and had gone about the task of placing plaques, etc. at these places to indicate their historical significance. The records do not indicate the location of these historic sites, however, it would seem that many of these were located in Manitowoc. (e.g. in Washington Park — the first city park and also location of the first fair grounds, the place where Benjamin Jones set foot on Manitowoc when he arrived in 1836, etc.)

### 1946

Holy Family Convent became a life member of the Society in this year. It appears that there were few who had become life members before that year.

### 1947

1947 seems to have been a year in which membership was increased from 69 (in 1946) to 194 in 1947. The greater interest in the Society which seems to have been stimulated by the State Historical Society having its annual meeting in Manitowoc from August 22 through the 24th. It was characterized as "a folklore convention." During the days of the State Historical Society convention the 100th anniversary of shipbuilding and of Rahr Malting Company was celebrated. At the same time the founding of the Village of Mishicot in 1847 was also celebrated. An amendment to the by-laws gave authorization to bestow "honorary memberships to the Society to those deemed worthy of special recognition."

### 1948

1948 did not seem to be a year of significance. The museum seemed to be "the Society". An attendance of 38,789 was reported for the years of its existence. The county appropriation was increased to \$500. 1948 was the Centennial year of Wisconsin's statehood. The Society cooperated in the observance by having "an old-timer's day". Membership dropped to 120, Larry Geiger became a life member on May 10, 1948.

### 1949

In 1949 a controversy developed about the use that had been made of the Rahr Civic Center since the Manitowoc County Historical Society had been given the responsibility of management of the property. There were two issues which brought on the controversy. The number of artifacts that had been given the Society had become so great that other uses of the building were severely restricted. In a communication to the State Historical Society it was stated that there were 20 organizations in Manitowoc which had been denied use of the Rahr Civic Center as a meeting place, or for other purposes for which these organizations may have felt a need.

On Monday, January 17, 1949 the Manitowoc Herald-Times published a City Council report of the meeting held on that date in which there was this paragraph: "Committee to whom was referred communication from Mrs. Reinhardt Rahr requesting the Council to investigate the uses to which the Rahr Civic Center building had been put, returned same recommending placing on file." Upon motion on roll call the committee's report was unanimously accepted and communication placed on file. Ayes 13, Nays, none.

The issue did not die by virtue of the

action taken by the City Council. Rather it resulted in the resignation of John G. Johnson as president of the Society, and in the closing of the Rahr Civic Center as a museum. All of the artifacts that had been displayed were to be returned to their donors, if these were known, and the remaining articles were to be stored in a vacant school building. However, vandals broke into this building, and did considerable damage. Ultimately the articles still useable were moved to other storage buildings, and many of the damaged ones were hauled to waste disposal sites. The disposition of these artifacts had an adverse effect on public relations of the Society, some of which persists to this day.

As to the effect on the Society, this can be seen as one looks at membership statistics, they show from 1948 there was a decrease in Society membership from 120 to 28. Incidentally, another casualty of the controversy was the resignation of the secretary. During the time of the controversy the secretary-treasurer was a member of the office staff of the mayor of Manitowoc.

As for the museum, the total number of visitors to the museum during the years of its existence was 38,789. Nearly every state in the union was represented in the "guest book".

## 1951 through 1960

### 1951

Presidents who served the Society during these years were:

John V. Stevenson ..... 1951-52  
 Perc Brandt ..... 1952-60

Persons listed on membership rolls of 1951 numbered 28. The minutes reflect that 14 persons attended the annual meeting with "an uncertainty as to what the future role of the Society should be in view of the termination of the museum at the Rahr Civic Center." In spite of this turn of events the county appropriation was increased to

\$1,000. Members of the Board of Directors during 1951 were John Stevenson, James Spindler, Wilmer Haese, Richard Gorski, (the recently appointed director of the Rahr Civic Center), John A. Norman, Perc Brandt, and Ralph Plumb

There were no minutes or records in which were recorded what may have transpired during these years. Perc Brandt had become the president in January 1952.

### 1953

This was the year when the Society purchased two machines to project slides on a glass screen with an accompanying tape dialogue at a cost of \$250 each.

### 1954

Is given as the year of the St. Nazianz and Kiel Centennial; apparently an observance in which the Society was involved. Two films were shown at the annual meeting. One was entitled "Our Inheritance From the Past," and the other, "Life in 18th Century Williamsburg." A concerted effort was made to increase the membership of the Society. Prospective members were invited to attend the annual meeting . . . 375 invitations were mailed, and 12 persons attended the annual meeting. Incidentally, the records show that for the first time refreshments were served at the close of the meeting.

### 1955

County appropriation this year was \$900. The records show these expenditures of funds:

\$400 for diorama representing a major Indian culture.

\$200 for purchase of a ship model for the marine room.

\$150 for a completion of the film history of Manitowoc

### 1956

The Society votes to sponsor the publication of the History of the Madison School on N. 7th and State

Streets. The cost of printing was \$150. Another diorama was purchased to represent the old copper cultures and steps taken to add another to represent a stockaded village of the middle Mississippi River.

### 1957

Seven members attended the March 21 annual meeting. Dr. Rajko Lozar was asked to meet with Dr. Lord of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin to discuss the future of the Manitowoc County Historical Society.

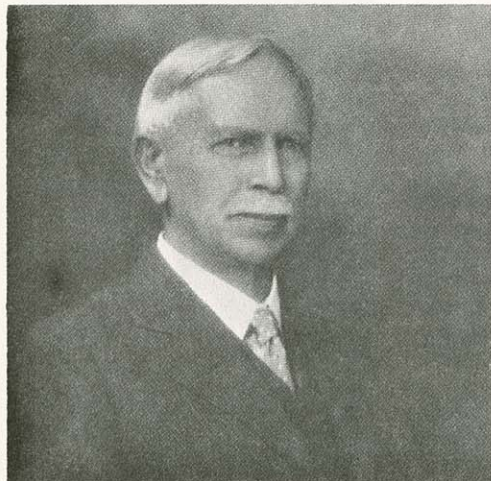
There are no records or minutes in which there was a report of any happenings or meeting held during these years. This might well have been the period when the demise of the Society seemed imminent but which was followed by what someone has characterized as "the third resurrection."

## 1961 through 1966

The manuscript relating to the history of the Manitowoc County Historical Society, which you are reading, was written in February. People generally are awaiting the season of spring . . . that season when the drabness of winter will be followed by a resurrection of new life, the season when all of nature responds with the glories of the new life . . . enough to cause poets to wax with enthusiasm as they describe "what is so rare as a day in June," or as a day in spring.

These years of the new birth of the Manitowoc County Historical Society are ones that we must not gloss over. We must take note of the leadership that the Society had as there was a renewal of interest, and when there was a renewed enthusiasm and determination that the objectives named in the charter given in 1906 should be remembered. We must pay tribute to those who helped the organization to "go forward."

1961 began with the following serving as officers:



### Fred Christensen

Another of those who signed the articles of incorporation in January 1906. Born in Denmark in 1858, an immigrant to America at the age of four years, and called a "farm" in Two Rivers, where he lived the rest of his life. He became a teacher, then the superintendent of schools, from 1899 to 1904, and when the Manitowoc County Normal School was organized in 1904 he became a "teacher of teachers." He continued as the principal of that school until 1934 when he retired. He died in 1958. See the May 1982 Manitowoc County Historical Society newsletter for a biography of Mr. Christensen.

President.....Mrs. Ray Frick  
 Vice-Pres. .... Mrs. Wm. Saucier  
                   Mrs. William Mueller  
                   Sr. Orestes  
 Secretary..... Marlin L. Tanck  
 Directors: Dr. Hoffman  
               Joseph Rappel  
               John A. Muller

Fifty-one persons were members during this year. At the annual meeting Joseph Rappel spoke about "The History of the Garfield School" which was located at S. 21st and Clark Streets. A committee was appointed to serve as an editorial committee to publish the Garfield School History. On this committee were: Sr. M. Thomas More, Mrs. D. Harris, and Mrs. Marlin Tanck. William Schreck of the Office of Local History of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin was present to speak about the organization and functions of a local history society.

This meeting was followed with another meeting on June 21 in which a summer program was formulated to include:

- a. A caravan of people to visit Manitowoc County landmarks.
- b. A style show featuring old-time costumes.
- c. The publication of "The History of the Garfield School", cost \$297. This was a project in which much of the research was done by sixth grade pupils, under the direction of Joseph Rappel. Mr. Rappel had been editor of two previous publications relating to the history of Manitowoc schools... these were of the McKinley and Madison schools.

In October, Mr. Rappel submitted for publication a manuscript entitled "Markers and Monuments in Manitowoc County." Publication was ordered. 1,000 copies were printed — cost of printing \$385.00

### 1962

The annual meeting was held on January 30. All officers were re-elected. On May 13 a dinner meeting was held at Hotel Manitowoc to honor Ralph Plumb. Dr. Clifford Lord of UW-Madison was the guest speaker. He had been a former executive officer of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin

The Manitowoc County Historical Society sponsored the Regional Historical Society Convention of Junior Historians. Prizes were given for the best visual entries, and oral and written reports. The Society voted to "research" the chain and anchor monument at the end of Lincoln Boulevard. The County appropriation this year was \$500.

### 1963

At the annual meeting on January 28 twelve persons were present. Officers elected were:

President.....Mrs. Ray Frick  
 1st Vice-Pres..... Joseph Rappel

2nd Vice-Pres. ... Mrs. Wm. Saucier  
 3rd Vice-Pres. .... Ray Frick  
 Sec'y-Treas. .... Marlin L. Tanck  
 Directors: Mrs. Erna Mueller  
               Walter Zander

The Society voted to employ William Frick, an anthropology student, to catalog the collection of Indian relics at the Rahr Civic Center. The Society voted to sponsor a scholarship of fifty dollars to a high school senior. No expenditures were reported for this year.

### 1964

The records indicate that the Two Rivers Historical Society was organized with a membership of 47 members... a figure that exceeded the membership of the Manitowoc County Historical Society. The guest speaker at the annual meeting was Ellen Charter of the Two Rivers Historical Society. Her topic: "The recently organized Two Rivers Historical Society."

In the annual meeting Joseph Rappel deplored the abandonment of the museum. He urged the continuation of the collection and preservation of pioneer artifacts. Many of these artifacts he said were "one of a kind", and if one passes by the opportunity to preserve the artifact, there will likely not be another one that can be gotten. Ralph Plumb urged that there be programs at quarterly meetings in addition to the business meetings. The records of the Society indicated that there were 16 life members and 31 annual dues paying members. It was voted that a marker be put on the stone monument at Jambo Creek. This was done on February 27, 1964.

5,000 copies of a brochure were printed in which the objectives and services of the Manitowoc County Historical Society were described. The Society sponsored a booth at the Manitowoc County Fair.

Joseph Rappel appeared before the County Board of Supervisors to urge the building of a pioneer village. A committee was appointed to seek a suitable rural school which could become the first building of the contemplated village. Mr. Rappel noted that the various school districts of the county had records which ought to be preserved. A committee was named to pursue the gathering of these records and preserving them. (The UW-Green Bay became the custodian of these records). Research was completed on the history of the 3rd and 7th ward schools in Manitowoc. These were published in a booklet having the title "The History of the Manitowoc Southside Schools".

John Herr of Washington High School in Two Rivers was the recipient of the 1964 Manitowoc County Historical Society scholarship. Officers elected to serve in 1964 were:

President..... Joseph Rappel  
 1st Vice-Pres..... James Spindler  
 Sec'y-Treas. .... Mrs. Clyde Pfeiffer  
 A brochure relating to historic sites in Manitowoc County was published. A Society scrapbook was ordered to be kept. County appropriation this year was \$500.



Joseph Rappel

### 1965

At the annual meeting on January 20 the following officers were named:  
 President..... Joseph Rappel  
 1st Vice-Pres.....Mrs. Ray Frick  
 2nd Vice-Pres. .... Dr. Rajko Lozar  
 3rd Vice-Pres. .... Lee Gregory  
 Sec'y-Treas. .... Armond Kueter  
 Historian ..... Mrs. D. M. Harris  
 Directors: Sr. M. Thomas More  
               Harold Crows  
               Edw. Ehler

During this year the dedication of the courthouse square in Manitowoc Rapids took place. It was ordered that the Society print stationery and envelopes. A committee was named to begin working to build an historical village. Members of the committee were: Vining Ihlenfeld, Marlin Tanck, and Herb Vander Bloemen. The county appropriation was \$500. Receipts during the year amounted to \$1,954.54, with expenditures in the amount of \$267.39. A booth was again sponsored at the County Fair.

The Society suffered a tragic loss on December 12, 1965 in the untimely death of its president, Joseph Rappel. He had been an indefatigable worker for the Society during the decade preceding his death. He was the author of the "Centennial History of the Manitowoc County Schools", "The Story of a Century", "Markers and Monuments of Manitowoc County", The history of all of the schools of the City of Manitowoc up to the time of such schools as Franklin, Jackson, Monroe and Stangel. He was a part of a small group who had resolved that "there shall be a resurrection" at a time when the demise of the Society seemed a certainty. His talent was in historical research and the writing of history. His



genius has been preserved in his writing.

## 1966

Armond Kueter was president of the Society this year. Mrs. Clyde Pfeffer was the secretary-treasurer. An inventory was made of the landmarks in Manitowoc County, and the list was sent to the State Historical Society of Wisconsin. Many of the landmarks became "registered landmarks," and were so listed in the state records. The county appropriation was \$1,000. The Society was represented at the Northeastern Wisconsin Regional meeting at Sturgeon Bay.

A great need was expressed for a "home" where artifacts, records, etc. could be stored, and where the collection and preservation of artifacts could proceed. It was felt that the answer to this problem was to proceed with building a village. On the

## The Years of the Third Resurrection 1967 to Present

### 1967 through 1968

#### 1967

##### Total Membership 154

These were the years when Sister Thomas More was president. On the roster in 1967 there were 138 members, and 12 others who were life members. It appears that the first issues of the Society newsletter had been issued in 1966. These were mimeographed sheets. In the first meeting of the year it was ordered that henceforth newsletters be printed rather than mimeographed. It was further ordered that each year there be a series of three occupational monographs. The first monograph to be published related to Joe Carbon of Branch, and his experiences as a blacksmith.

It was further ordered that there be four quarterly meetings of the Society each year, plus an annual meeting. At

committee this year to further this project were: Vining Ihlenfeld, Jerome Ledvina, and Junius H. Pleuss. The committee considered acreage owned by Manitowoc County.

The Manitowoc County Historical Society received fine publicity this year when they took on the project of cleaning the St. Mary's cemetery at Manitowoc Rapids, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Frick chaired this project. The Boy Scouts aided them in furtherance of this project. A guided bus tour of landmarks in Manitowoc County was taken in July.

The County Board of Supervisors transferred ownership of the courthouse square in Manitowoc Rapids to the Manitowoc County Historical Society. The Society voted to make the "square" into a tourist wayside.

each quarterly meeting there was to be a program relating to some phase of local history. One of the programs was produced by Henry Glander which had the title, "Interesting People I Have Photographed."

The building of an historical village remained uppermost in Society planning. The County Board of Supervisors was very cooperative. They offered several sites all being based on where the county fair would be located if and when the New York Avenue and N. 18th Street location was abandoned.

The building of an image for the Society was an important objective. This was done by:

1. Window displays in store windows. An outcome, the construction of a portable display case which could

be shown about the county.

2. The annual exhibit at the County Fair.

3. Scheduling of regular radio talk shows relating to phases of local history. Ruhl Kluczinske was the Society spokesman in this feature.

4. The building of a slide library so that local history programs could be given at community groups. The first slide shows were a part of the County Fair display in 1967.

Other features of this 1967 program:

1. Much of the business of the Society was done at monthly meetings of the Board of Directors.

2. Publication was authorized of "Manitowoc County's Waterpowered Mill sites."

3. Robert Lyman was named to succeed Dr. Rajko Lozar on the Board of Directors.

4. Four registered landmarks were approved by the State Society, and were placed at the locations with appropriate ceremonies.

5. A project of taping interviews with prominent old-time residents was begun. Sue Wiesner was the first person who did the interviewing.

6. An appropriation of \$500 was given the Society by the County Board of Supervisors.

7. Investigation began of procuring a Soo Line locomotive. The locomotive was given the Society on Dec. 5, 1967.

8. A budget of \$2,160 was adopted as the work program for 1968.

9. Membership dues was increased to \$2.00 per individual member, first change in the annual dues in 61 years.

10. Sister M. Thomas More and Edw. Ehlert attend Regional Convention at Sturgeon Bay in November.

11. Coffee and doughnuts became a regular feature at each quarterly meeting.

12. Binders for use in filing newsletters and occupational monographs were ordered.



#### Sister M. Thomas More Bertels

*As was remarked as we began the discussion of the 1960's, the years from 1960 through 1966 were the beginnings of the "third resurrection" . . . the first seven years were ones of "growing up to maturity". In 1967 someone was needed who would chart a course toward a goal of becoming what was envisioned by the founders in 1906. There was a re-discovery of our rich heritage, and a realization that Manitowoc County was the result of some six or more ethnic groups contributing to the development of a county envisioned by one of the early arrivals . . . "a county which was an American paradise flowing with milk and honey." Sr. M. Thomas More was the mariner who pointed the ship to the goal that we became as we concluded the 75th year of our history.*

*Sister was born in Ironwood, Michigan. She attended public and parochial schools and then St. Embrose High School in Ironwood, Michigan. In her youth she worked four years as a clerk in a grocery store. She completed her studies for a B.A. degree at Silver Lake College in 1943. She received her M.A. degree in 1949 and in 1962 earned a Ph. D. degree from Catholic University of America. She has been teaching since 1940, teaching in high schools at Hollandtown, WI, Chicago, IL and Waukesha, WI. In 1960 she began teaching at Silver Lake College.*

13. At the close of the year the treasurer reported receipts in the amount of \$2,021.58. (The budget had called for \$2,160). Disbursements were \$1,666.90.

## 1968

James Gogats request the support of the Society in procuring a submarine as a permanent display of Manitowoc's contribution to the World War II effort, and also as an extension to the Marine Museum's efforts to feature marine history. The Society enthusiastically supported Mr. Gogats in this endeavor, and made a financial contribution to the Marine Museum in printing of the publication, "Manitowoc Submarines."

Significant actions of the Board of Directors:

a. It had been decided in 1967 that it would be impossible for a Society to operate on the basis of actions taken in quarterly meetings. Monthly meetings of the Board of Directors were held to expedite projects. The Board in its January meeting received approval to continue to operate in this manner.

b. The Model Railroad Club took over bringing the Soo Line locomotive to Manitowoc and refurbishing it. The Society contributed \$100 to further this project. The C and O carferry transported the locomotive from Milwaukee to Manitowoc without a charge for this service.

c. The Society purchased a Carousel projector and carrying case, also a Radiant Univision projection unit at a cost of \$220.58.

d. Life membership cost was increased from \$15.00 to \$25.00.

e. A poll is taken of Society membership to determine interest in building an Historical Village. Support of the project was overwhelming.

f. Veblen marker location approved at wayside on Highway 10 near Cato.

g. Manitowoc Society receives State Society certificate of commendation for excellence of publications program, (October 1968) Also for Ruhl Kluczinske's work in visual aids and for giving of slide lectures.

h. Authorization was given to consummate sale of the Niles Church to the Society — cost \$300.

## 1969

*Robert Lyman, President*

Significant happenings during this year:

a. Four quarterly meetings held. Attendance totals 152. Annual meeting was attended by 40 persons.

b. Communication dated Oct. 24, 1969 advises that the A. D. Jones pumper be placed in the custody of the Manitowoc County Historical Society, but title to the property remains with the City of Manitowoc.

c. County appropriation this year \$1,000.

d. All newsletters and monographs are mailed gratis to schools, libraries



*Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Vetting*

and news media.

e. Printing of a life membership certificate is ordered.

f. Society takes out a bulk mailing permit — cost is an initial payment of \$30, plus 1.4¢ per piece.

g. Since May 29, 1969 the Society has had an official seal.

h. The IRS insists on Society to be dedicated exclusively to educational purposes and that the Society will not attempt to influence legislation by propaganda or otherwise.

i. May 28, 1969 the Society receives a determination letter that we are a tax exempt organization. We come under the State Society's blanket exemption status by action taken in the Sept. 29, 1969 quarter meeting.

j. Nov. 13, 1969 Board of Directors meet to consider offer of Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Vetting to donate their 40-acre homestead for the purpose of building an Historical Village.

k. Fr. Francis Rose proposes publication of "Ghost Parishes and Cemeteries". Proposal approved in annual meeting on Nov. 25, 1969.

l. In annual meeting on Nov. 25, 1969, on motion by Ruhl Kluczinske, seconded by Francis Blahnik, and unanimously carried by voice vote, the Society accepts donation of the 40-acre homestead offered by Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Vetting, and authorize that legal steps be taken to consummate the transaction.

m. Board supports the wishes of Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Vetting that the Sorenson home in Valders me moved to the Historical Village as soon as legal transactions are completed.

n. Warranty deed and written agreement transferring title to property signed on December 19, 1969.

o. Action is taken immediately to move the Sorenson home. Utilities deposits, \$250; Eis movers, \$1,500; and cost of foundation, \$479.63.

p. Honorary life membership in Society voted for Mr. and Mrs. Hugo Vetting.

## 1970

*Robert Lyman, President*

Significant happenings this year:

1. An appreciation banquet is held at Manitowoc Motor Hotel on Sunday night January 11, 1970. Sr. Thomas More was the "m/c". She said,

"History is rooted in the past and focused on the future. There are sociological and political reasons for this Village. The Society can now preserve evidence of the roots of people in the American way." "The idea of building an Historical Village has been a matter of record in the Society for nearly a score of years. This gift will finally get our Historical Village on the go," said Vining Ihlenfeld.

2. A policy making board of five members is named to be the Village governing board. Members on this board: Vining Ihlenfeld, Harvey Stangel, Armond Kueter, Atty. Leslie Valleskey, president and secretary ex officio members and Ruhl Kluczinske.

3. An honorary life membership is given Ralph Plumb in an appropriate ceremony.

4. Northeastern Wisconsin Regional Convention is held at Fox Hills on Sept. 26. Bus trip to Rahr Civic Center, Marine Museum and Village in the evening. 135 persons attend the convention.

5. Society votes to borrow \$5,000 to begin moving of buildings, needed construction work, etc. Involved the moving projects covered by this loan, the Sorenson home, the Niles church, and depot. Kiwanis Club donates \$3,500 toward moving of the church).

6. Society again has a display at the County Fair.

7. Society participates in the Centennial parade. The A. F. Jones pumper is the featured attraction.

8. Members take part in an auto caravan in which the Ozaukee Historical Village is visited.

9. Manitowoc County again appropriates \$1,000 to support Manitowoc County Historical Society.

10. A motion is made, seconded and carried to revise the Constitution and by-laws under which the Society has operated since 1906.

11. A second printing of the "Story of a Century", of which Joseph Rappel was the author, is ordered.

12. The Society is given a "home" on third floor of the Rahr Civic Center. Purpose, for storage of publications, artifacts, equipment, etc. Warehouse space given also by Colorcraft Printers at 1921 S. 10th Street.

13. First Village fund-raising project is undertaken.

14. Ruhl Kluczinske has monthly radio program, and a program on Channel 5 TV in which the Society is featured.

15. Society places in nomination to the State Historical Society Evan Gagnon, Two Rivers, for his book, "Neshoto, the Story of Two Rivers. He is honored by receiving the State Historical Society book award for 1970.

16. A ladies committee concentrates on repair and refurbishing of the Sorenson home; the aim, to have it ready for public viewing in spring of 1971.

17. Historical Village has receipts of \$5,311.87 (\$2,500 is borrowed money) during first year of operation. Expenditures amount to \$4,798.94. Society has receipts of \$4,221.09, and expenditures of \$3,447.62.

18. Twenty Gardeners of Manitowoc move a granary to Village, the first building in what was to be a complex of farm buildings.

## 1971

*Robert Lyman, President*

Highlights of this year:

1. Mrs. Ruth Savera, State Historical Society, speaks at quarterly meeting.

2. Edw. Ehlert is sent to Nashville, Tennessee, to attend an AASLH seminar on Historical Society publications and printing. Seminar held at Vanderbilt University. Society becomes member of AASLH.

3. 400 trees are planted for windbreak on east, south and west boundaries of the Vetting acreage.

4. History tours are arranged for June 20 and July 22. About 200 persons go on these tours. Mrs. Ruth Beyer, of County offices arranges transportation details.

5. A family picnic and work day is held on July 18.

6. Society again has booth at County Fair. Jack Christman, chairman.

7. Society appropriation, \$1,500.

8. Fourteen Society members attend Regional Convention at Marinette.

9. Cooking school held on November 18. 500 attend. Net receipts of cooking school, \$947.10. Colorcraft donates 1,500 cookbooks which are sold for 50¢ a piece.

10. Constitution and by-laws revised. 100 copies printed.

11. Brochure entitled "Be a Part of our Heritage" is printed.

12. Relationship of Society to Rahr-West Civic Center is studied. Summary of findings on page 163 of minutes. Rahr Civic Center Board accepts articles of agreement. (see minutes, p. 1937, Feb. 22, 1972.)

13. Receipts for Society and Village total \$6,441.15 and expenditures \$5,879.60.

## 1972

*Jack Severson, President*

1. Distinguished service awards are given to Martha Regli, Dr. Lozar and Joe Zahorik.

2. Francis Kadow speaks at January quarterly meeting. Forty-six attend. His remarks were tape recorded.

3. Al Bartels begins interviews with pioneer residents which are tape recorded.

4. Other speakers at quarterly meetings. Roy Valitchka, Mrs. Reuben Rusch, (Early History of Reedsville), and Mr. and Mrs. Sanders of Fond du

Lac (the Galloway house and their Pioneer Village).

5. 750 white cedar trees are planted in Village.

6. Society has file of 700 slides. Ruhl Kluczinske supplies slides taken from books, post card pictures, etc.

7. Thompson cabin is hauled to Village by Hugo Vetting and Al Bartels. They rebuild cabin in Village.

8. Central YMCA of Chicago, forty-five in bus, are given tour of Village on Oct. 13.

9. History mobile of State Society comes to Manitowoc for 2-day stay in November.

10. Regional Convention at New Holstein held on August 12th. Several from Manitowoc attend.

11. Roof of church is reshingled — cost \$2,900. Gladwin Kresheck reshingles church steeple.

12. Ruhl Kluczinske dies in October 1972.

13. Village and Society receipts \$11,324.30. Disbursements, \$11,968.09. County Board appropriation, \$1,500.

## 1973

*Donald Groll, President*

Speakers at quarterly meetings, Dr. Rauch, Irene Luetgen, Kiel, John TeePoorten, Mrs. Chandler Harris, Sturgeon Bay, speaks about Genealogy.

1. Distinguished Service Award is presented posthumously to Ruhl Kluczinske.

2. Town of Liberty contributes \$200 toward restoration of Thompson cabin.

3. A historical tour is taken on July 26. 126 senior citizens go on tour. Forty-five Society members go on tour on Sept. 9.

4. Display case moved to several locations in county.

5. Kiel Historical Society becomes an affiliate of our County Society, and of the State Historical Society of Wisconsin.

6. Ice cream sundae application for marker is made. Manitowoc County Historical Society and Two Rivers Societies, co-sponsors.

7. Edw. Ehlert and Mrs. Hugo Vetting are delegates to Regional Convention at Oconto on August 11.

8. Reprinting of Nagle's History of Manitowoc County is ordered. (Occupational Monograph number 22).

9. Society has exhibit at the Mall in Wonderful Wisconsin Week.

10. Society mourns the death of Eleanor Vetting, wife of Hugo Vetting donors of Pine Crest Village. (Sept. 23, 1973).

11. Pictures from Ruhl Kluczinske collection displayed at Silver Lake College.

12. Brennan building is moved to Village from Valders. Cost of moving, \$1,600.

13. Sr. Martina and Donald Groll attend annual meeting of State

Historical Society on November 3.

14. A file of Manitowoc newspapers from 1895 to 1920 stored in office of Vining Ihlenfeld.

15. Membership dues increased from \$2.00 to \$3.00. Family memberships to \$5.00 and Life membership, \$50.00; Business and Industry membership, \$25.00.

16. Forty-seven persons attend annual meeting.

17. Total membership in 1973 — 424.

18. County subsidy, \$1,500. Receipts during year, \$8,452.46. Disbursements \$7,820.32.

## 1974

*Donald Groll, President*

Members of the Board of Directors during this year: Richard Stolz, Gladwin Kresheck, Al Grimm, Bernhard Hagen, Mrs. Uriel Garey, Charles Bonnefoi, Carl Blahnik, Sister Martina Van Ryzin, and Edw. Ehlert. Some of the more important happenings during this year.

1. The Society pays \$2,700 on a note gotten two years before plus interest in the amount of \$206.53.

2. Distinguished Service Awards presented to Francis Kadow, Mrs. Hugo Vetting (posthumously) Ralph Plumb, and Edw. Ehlert. (see page 240 of minutes).

3. A tour of county landmarks is conducted on July 9. 109 persons take the tour. Bus tour taken to Galloway House in Fond du Lac.

4. Liberty Pole in Town of Liberty receives Registered Landmark No. 105.

5. One hundred persons attend quarterly meeting at Carlton-on-the-Lake on May 22. Prof. Raymond Specht, UW-Stevens Point, the guest speaker. His topic: "Wisconsin Railroads".

6. Board agrees on these priorities: (1) a building to be used for storage of artifacts, and (2) a building to be used as a fire station.

7. A bequest in the amount of \$1,500 is made by Earl Vits.

8. Pine Crest Road into Village is widened for four rods, and is blacktopped; also a turn around at entrance.

9. Mr. and Mrs. Groll and Bernice Zander attend regional meeting at Peshtigo on August 7.

10. Construction of toilet facilities in Village proceeds.

11. Thompson cabin dedicated on September 29, with the Rev. Conrad Thompson of Minneapolis, the dedicatory speaker.

12. An exhibit at the Mall on November 8-9-10. Manitowoc Fire Department memorabilia featured.

13. A one-half day tour of historic places in Manitowoc County conducted for social science teachers of Manitowoc School District.

14. Hubert Wentorf gives slide lecture on "History of Two Rivers" at

quarterly meeting. Society provides J. B. Mann Library with duplicate set of slides together with taped commentary.

15. A furnace is installed in Vetting homestead — cost \$638.94.

16. The large number of people attending the dedicatory program of Thompson cabin results in ten recommendations for crowd control. (see minutes page 270)

17. Entrance and exit roads into Village completed and improved.

18. County appropriation of \$1,500 is received.

## 1975

*Donald Groll, President*

497 persons were members during 1975. Of this number 76 persons had life membership. Eight persons became life members during year.

Some happenings:

1. Four quarterly meetings were held:

Jan. 23 — Forty persons attend. Speaker: Mrs. January Petri; Topic: "Some Collectibles"

March 25 — Twenty-five persons attended. Speaker: Napoleon Lintereur, "The Evolution of Fire Arms."

May 22 — Dr. Nancy O. Lurie, Anthropologist, Milwaukee Public Museum; Topic: "The Contemporary American Indian Scene in Historical Perspective". Seventy-eight persons attend.

Sept. 25 — Twenty-five persons attend. Speaker: Jean Pen Loerke, County Historian, Waukesha County; Topic: "Museum Bylines."

2. Hugo Vetting is given Society's Distinguished Service Award.

3. Historical tour sponsored in cooperation with Manitowoc County Senior Citizens. 109 persons go on tour.

4. Short tours conducted for school children to Manitowoc County Landmarks and to Pine Crest Village.

5. Representative of Society on six "Be My Guest" programs of WOMET.

6. \$425 is received from sale of publications.

7. Sorenson home completely refurbished, interior walls, ceilings, painted or papered. All floors varnished. Rooms furnished to depict 1900 style of family living.

8. Soo Line locomotive and tender moved to Village after four years of storage in Northwestern Railroad Roundhouse in Manitowoc.

9. Subsidy of \$1,700 received from Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors.

10. Parking lots, road improvements made in Village.

## 1976

*Mrs. Uriel Garey, President*

Membership total — 527. Seventy-seven persons are life members. Three persons become life members in 1976. Two life members die, Eldred Herrmann and Clara Prochaska.

Happenings in 1976:

1. Ralph Plumb, the lone surviving charter member of the Society dies on March 21, 1976.

2. Quarterly meetings held on these dates:

January 25 — Speaker: Walter Koepke; Topic: "Manitowoc in the Gay '90's". Sixty persons present. He dies on February 20, 1976.

March 25 — Slide lecture on "Old World Wisconsin". Fifty persons present.

May 26 — Dinner meeting at Sorge's Charcoal House, 133 persons present to hear Clarence Spevachek speak concerning the "History of Two Creeks".

Sept. 20 — Meeting at Niles Church in Village. Speaker: Vi Teeple, Hatfield, Curator of Thunderbird Museum; Her topic: "Indians Artifacts".

3. Seventeen slide lectures given this year. Two appearances on "Be My Guest" program of WOMET.

4. Al Bartels makes a number of taped interviews of old-time Manitowoc County residents.

5. Radio station WHA, Madison comes to Manitowoc County to interview 44 Manitowoc County residents. These interviews are the property of the Manitowoc County Historical Society, and are stored at the Manitowoc Public Library.

6. Newsletters feature a number of articles written by Agnes Dunne's Creative Writing Club.

7. Three books are reprinted this year:

a. "The Centennial History of Manitowoc County Schools."

b. Revised edition of "Markers and Monuments" printed.

c. "The History of Two Creeks."

8. "Footprints of our Heritage" by Robert Lyman is published.

9. Niles Community Church is painted, both interior and exterior, new doors installed, windows puttied, floor painted, and electric lights installed.

10. Rahr Foundation contributes to moving of Shadyside School. A basement constructed for the school.

11. Stangel Foundation contributes \$11,500 toward erection of a Blacksmith Shop in Village. The Anton Witt family contributes tools and equipment to make of the blacksmith one that could be completely operational.

12. Kunze cabin is moved to Village in August, the Luebke family the donors. Junior Service League is sponsor of this project.

13. Town of Manitowoc Rapids blacktops Pine Crest Road leading into the Village.

14. Wisconsin Power and Light Co. extends power line into Village.

15. Bulletin board is constructed.

16. Manitowoc County Genealogical Society reprints "Falge's History of

Manitowoc County", and adds an index to the volume.

## 1977

*Mrs. Edith Garey, President*

1977 membership totals 657; 23 persons become life members the largest number of persons ever to become life members in a year. 100 persons now hold life memberships.

A fee schedule for those who would want to visit Pine Crest Village is set up. \$1.00 for adults and 50¢ for children. When children visit as members of a school group, the charge is 25¢. Persons who are members of the Manitowoc County Historical Society are admitted free.

Quarterly meetings:

January 27 — Speaker: Richard Cote, "Beneath these Stones", a lecture relating to the work of the Old Cemeteries Association.

March 24 — Speaker: Henry Willert; His topic: "The Rogers Street Fishing Village in Two Rivers."

May 26 — 166 persons attend dinner meeting at Fox Hills at which Ada Deer, is the speaker. Her topic: "Tribal Problems of the Menominee Indians".

Sept. 29 — Speaker: Joe Brisch; His topic: "Limestone, a valuable Manitowoc County Resource."

Slide lectures: A total of about 200 slides added to collection this year. Eight slide lectures given. Several taped slide lectures prepared.

Historical Village:

a. The Village is opened to public viewing on the second and fourth Sunday afternoons in June through August. "The public response is overwhelming, states the 1977 President's report."

b. A Carousel projector and screen is added to Village equipment. Four taped lectures are made available:



*Edith Garey*

1. "Indian History of Manitowoc County"

2. "Our History From the Pioneer Days to 1900"

3. "From Hand Labor to Power Tools Chiefly in the Farming Industry"

4. "Landmarks of Manitowoc County"

c. The Shadyside School is completely furnished.

Life members who died: Mrs. William Rahr and Victor Trastek.

## 1978

*Robert Brown, President*

Quarterly meetings held:

January — Gary Whitbeck, speaker; New Director of the Rahr-West Civic Center and Museum.

March — Speaker: Dr. Chester Natunewicz; His topic: "The Bohemian Influence on Manitowoc County History."

May — Dinner meeting at Kellnersville. Speaker: Dr. Richard A. Erney, State Historical Society Wisconsin, Madison.

September — Meeting held in Niles Church, Pine Crest Village. Program: The premier showing of Dr. John Lynch's Historical Village slides.

November — Annual meeting, speaker: Mr. Allan Pape; His topic: "Some Principles and Methods in Historical Building Restoration".

1. Two exhibits at Mall were held. Pioneer life featured in these displays. Judith Bertler and Mrs. Mildred Randall planned and put up the displays.

2. 561 persons are members of the Society. 101 are life members. Membership loss results as a result of increase in annual membership fee from \$3.00 to \$5.00.

3. A subsidy of \$2,000 is received from the Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors.

4. Al Bartels continues to add to the library of taped interviews of old-time residents of Manitowoc County.

5. Research work begins with two CETA workers researching the History of Manitowoc County from 1911 to date.

6. An Organizational Manual is formulated by Col. Lester Kunish and a committee working under his chairmanship. The manual sets up four major committees: Finance, Administration, Plans and Programs and the Historical Village. Each committee is to be chaired by a vice-president. The committee structure operating under each vice-president is described with the functions and duties of each committee related.

7. Slide lectures are given to 25 different groups this year.

8. Since March 1, 1978, CETA workers are assigned to give aid to Historical Society projects. Two persons are research workers, two are Village guides, and from one to three

workers perform Village maintenance and repair work.

9. A "law building" is moved to the Village from a location on Western Avenue in Manitowoc. This project funded by the Dewane and Nash families and also the lawyers of Manitowoc County.

10. The Carsten Building is moved to the Village, a foundation is put under the building by CETA workers, the exterior repaired and interior completely refurbished. The first floor becomes a saloon, and second floor rooms become dressmaking shops and a doctors office.

11. A cupola is added to the Shadyside School, and a bell put into the cupola. Interior repair, painting, varnishing, etc. done. Area in front of school sodded.

12. Museum displays are put up on second floor of the blacksmith shop.

13. Railroad tracks extended to north. Flat car brought to site.

14. A simulated cemetery is added to the area west of the Niles Community Church.

15. A pulpit and electric organ is added to church furnishings.

16. Eight open houses held during the summer months with attendance ranging between several hundred to from four to five thousand.

In President Brown's annual report to the membership he stated, "The work of the Society is done by many interested volunteers who work under the direction of the vice-presidents. Whatever acclaim the Society has earned this year belongs to you, and I salute you for your dedication and your willingness to serve, often far beyond the call of duty."

## 1979

*Robert Brown, President*

Four quarterly meetings held:

January — Speaker: John Scyjewski, City Planning Office, Manitowoc; His topic: "Buildings of Historical Significance in downtown Manitowoc."

March — Speaker: Norman Zunker; His topic: "Antique Automobiles from 1920 to the Present".

May — Dinner meeting at Kellnersville. Speaker: Sr. M. Teresita Kittell. 116 persons attend. Her topic: "The History of Holy Family Convent."

September — Speaker: Mead Hansen, Sr.; His topic: "Significant happenings in Manitowoc County history, with special emphasis as to how Manitowoc was benefitted by federal work programs during the depression years."

a. Several store window displays were put up. There were exhibits at the Mall. One featured "Christmas in the 1900 Era". In the spring a display featured "A Woman's Work is Never Done."

b. The summer open house Village visitation program was continued with

attendance continuing to reflect the increased interest on the part of the public for this project.

c. Membership of the Society — 595. There are 102 life members.

d. Another booklet added to Society book publication program, the title, "Selected Editorials of John Nagle", also "The History of the Bohemians in Manitowoc County 1837-1931" by Frank Benes.

e. Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors support Society with subsidy of \$2,000 for the Society and \$1,000 for Village maintenance, etc.

f. Junius H. Pleuss Investment Corporation donates a 26' x 50' barn to Village, and pays for moving it, putting a foundation under it, and making necessary repairs, etc.

g. A building is moved to the Village which was refurbished, and rebuilt to become a "Welcome Center."

h. The Sykora Harness and Shoe Repair Shop is set up. All tools and equipment donated to Village by Joyce Sykora. This is also a shop that is completely operational (if necessary).

i. Two dug out canoes, sunken in a Manitowoc County lake are recovered and become part of the exhibit of Indian artifacts.

j. A parking lot is constructed to the south of church. An exit road constructed on west side of property.

k. A fireplace is constructed in the Thompson cabin.

l. Junius H. Pleuss puts up two statues "As Age Steps Aside and Youth Carries On", also "The Sower."

m. A donation of \$200 makes possible some landscaping, and also flower beds which beautify the Village as one enters, etc.

The president's report states, "Without doubt, this was the greatest record of progress in all areas ever made during the existence of the Society."

President Brown dies unexpectedly on October 1, 1979. Donald Groll is named to be acting president until January 1, 1980.

## 1980

*Richard Stolz, President*

Some 1980 happenings:

a. The "Kitchen Sampler" is republished. Originally published in 1971 and always a popular sales item.

b. The Mirro Company donates a dump truck for use in the Pine Crest Village.

c. Several barns are torn down to secure used lumber for Village repair and construction projects.

d. Quarterly meetings:

January — Speakers: Oscar Samz, Mishicot and Henry Greenwood, Two Rivers, "I Remember", the theme, with their remarks enchaned by memorabilia of the earlier days. Eighty-five persons attend.

March — Edith Garey, the guest speaker; Her topic: "What's in the

Trunk?" Artifacts, a number unfamiliar in the present period of history. Fifty-five persons attend.

May — Dinner meeting at Webers, 134 persons attend. Speaker: Mr. M. Thomas More; Her topic: "The Role of the Historian in Today's World." Entertainment by Mishicot High School Junior Swing Choir.

September — Thelma Benishek, the speaker; Her topic "Thelma Remembers . . ." Some recollections about Lenaville (now Branch). Forty persons attend. Someone remarked, "this was a thoroughly enjoyable hour."

e. The Society took part in the Manitowoc Memorial Day parade and also the Maritime Museum parade in August.

f. The Society had a significant part in the Rahr-West Museum and Civic

Center "Manitowoc Remembers" program in October. Persons able to perform certain crafts, some 2 dozen of them demonstrated in Room 3. Others demonstrated in the parking lot. Society contributes toward printing of booklet having the title "Manitowoc Remembers."

g. Three displays were put up at the Mall and the Edgewater Plaza.

h. The Frisbee family reunion is held at the Village in June.

i. The Winnebago Trail Marker is dedicated in June. Present for the dedication were three Winnebago Indians, Emanuel Lowe of Merrillan, Angelo La Mere and John Stacy of Schofield and Ringle. Sheldon Stromquist of the State Historical Society of Local History gives the dedicatory address.

j. The Veblen marker is relocated in Valders, in view of the discovery that original Veblen homestead was nearby.

k. Three persons become life members: Mrs. Martha Vinton, Mrs. Robert A. Phillips and Mrs. Charles P. Brady.

l. A number of persons attend State Historical Society sponsored workshops. Richard Stolz and Donald Groll attend Regional workshop at Wittenberg.

m. Anton Witt family contributes a Public Address system to the Pine Crest Village.

n. Daughters of Isabel purchase "play only" tape recorders for use in the Village. Lincoln High School class of 1922 enhances support of this project.

o. 15,000 "Come Visit" brochures are published.

p. Daniel Juchniewich is married at Niles Community Church in Pine Crest Village. Three other couples have wedding ceremony there this year also.

q. An organ originally used at Shoto, in a theater at Two Rivers, Green Bay and in recent years at the Novitiate in Gresham, is installed in the Niles Community Church.

## 1981

*Richard Stolz, President*

Some 1981 happenings:

1. Membership at close of 1981 is 957. Society has 113 life members. A membership gain of nearly 300 persons, the largest single year gain in membership in the history of the Society. Eight persons become life members.

2. Quarterly meetings:

January — Speaker: David Pamperin Executive Director of the Manitowoc Marine Museum; His topic: "Early Marine History of Manitowoc." Forty-nine persons attend.

March — Speaker: Dr. Henry Koch; His topic: "Political Influences During the 1850's on Manitowoc and Wisconsin". Sixty-seven persons attend.

May — 135 persons attend dinner meeting at Weber's. Speaker: Martin Perkins; "The Role of Research in Developing Outdoor Museums."

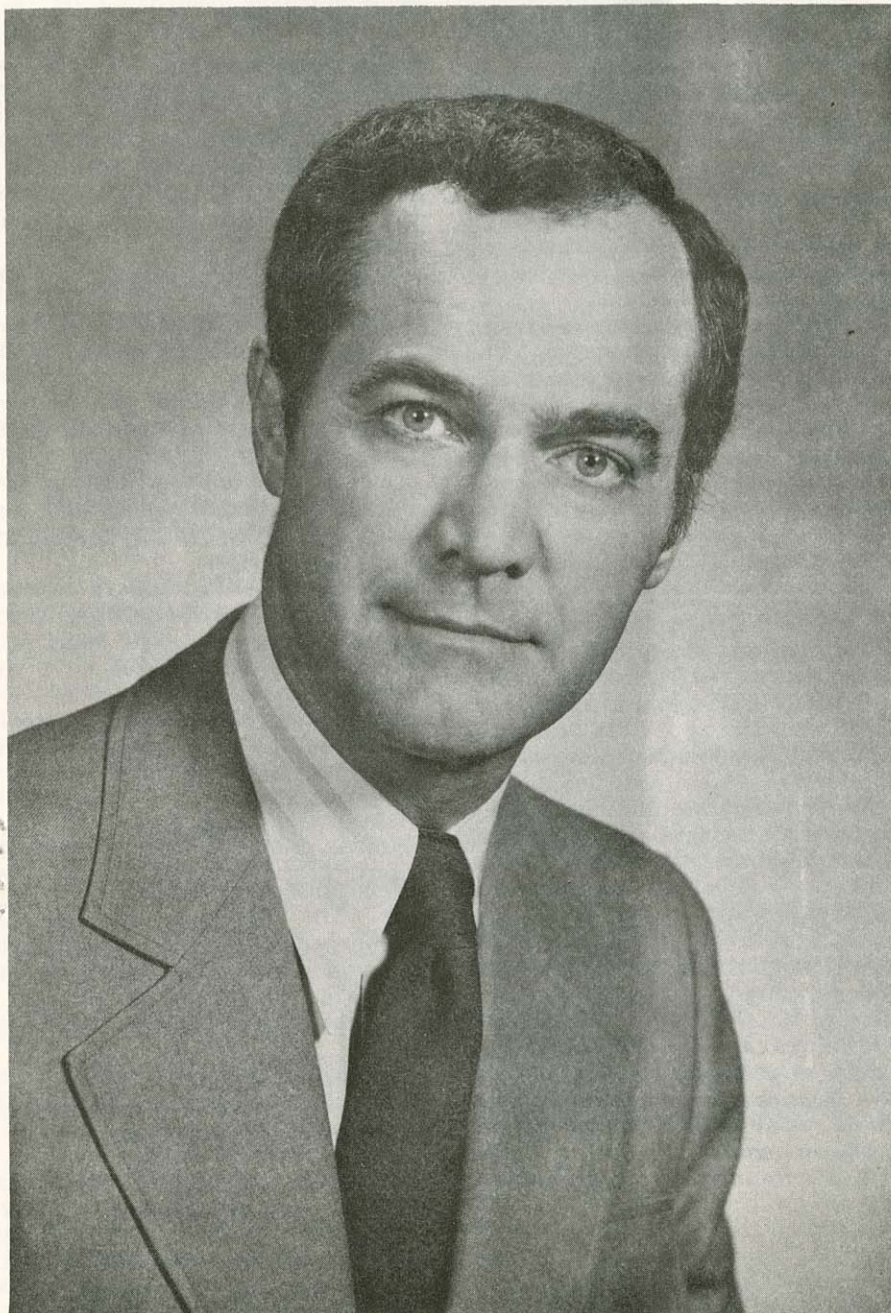
September — Speakers: Thelma Benishek, Mrs. Oscar Johnson and Hugo Vetting, "This I Remember . . ." Forty-six persons attend.

3. Society now has about 2,000 slides. Eleven slide lectures given during year. Five lectures related to Indians of Manitowoc County.

4. The book entitled "A Poor Boy Becomes a Country Doctor" by Dr. F. W. Hammond is published.

5. The County Board of Supervisors grants a subsidy of \$10,000.

6. About 50 persons are present for "Village Clean-up Day" on April 25. A number of volunteers help to close up Village in early November.



Dick Stolz

7. CETA workers programs closed as of October 1. This past summer there was much maintenance work done. Much work of repair, painting, etc. done on Kunze building.

8. Society cooperated with Expo in putting on "The Reenactment of the Revolutionary War," in August.

9. More than 200 persons volunteer as tour guides at Pine Crest Village six days of the week during June, July and August.

10. A sawmill is made completely operational as another Pine Crest Village attraction. A gasoline engine is overhauled to furnish the power.

11. The County Teachers College Alumni convert the former woodshed of Shadyside School into a display room for County Teachers College and County school records, pictures and other memorabilia.

12. Display cases constructed for use in school basement.

13. Electric stove and refrigerator installed in school basement for use of groups wishing to hold meetings in Village.

14. Refreshment wagon equipped with refrigeration and with electrical power.

15. Junior Service League completes work of repairing and refurbishing the Kunze building. The rooms will be furnished to depict the life style of people who lived in the 1870's.

16. A tabloid section of the Manitowoc Herald-Times Reporter on May 17 to publicize the special events of the summer at Pine Crest Village. The County Banker's Association pay for the costs of this special publication.

17. 15,000 brochures inviting people to "Come Visit" Pine Crest Village are published. These are sent to tourist information centers in Wisconsin and in Chicago.

18. The Robert Brown Memorial Fund furnishes funds to encase under glass the 1878 maps of Manitowoc County and the City of Manitowoc.

19. A dentist's office is set up in the Carsten's building. Pieces of equipment such as a dentist's chair and a foot operated drill are displayed.

20. A "free lunch" room is added to the saloon.

21. Work is begun on accessioning of the artifacts donated.

22. Four weddings are held in the Niles Church in 1981. A church service is conducted on September 20, sponsored by Manitowoc Kiwanis Club. Sixty-five persons are present.

23. A workshop sponsored by the State Historical Society of Wisconsin is held at Rahr-West Museum and Civic Club on March 7. Thirty-eight persons attend. The Manitowoc County Historical Society was the host.

24. Four members of the Society attend the Northeastern Wisconsin Regional Convention at Kewaunee on August 15.

25. Eight members of the Society attend the annual meeting of the Council of Local History of Madison on November 7. An Award of Merit is presented to Edward Ehlert in the name of the Society "for his role in developing an excellent publications program and other educational activities.

26. The American Association of State and Local History presents an "Award of Commendation" to Edward Ehlert, in the name of the Manitowoc County Historical Society for excellence of its publications program and other evidences of its role in collecting and preserving of local history. The Award was given specifically because of the great number of person involved in the writing of articles for publication in the Societies newsletters and occupational monographs. Mrs. Ursula Peterson, River Falls, comes to Manitowoc on November 24 to publicly present the Award. A reception is held at the Rahr-West Museum and Civic Center which is attended by upwards of 200 persons.

**MEMBERSHIP DATA**

Membership statistics may in a way reflect the extent to which the objectives of the Society were being realized. However, the membership records for many years were of a kind whereby one could not be sure of the exact number of persons who were members. In some years there were lists of names of persons who were

members. There were financial statements during those years also, and the facts relating to sums received in memberships did not conform to the lists of persons who were said to be members (in many instances, the financial records indicated a larger number of members than the membership lists indicated). In the great majority of years, however, the only records of members could be gleaned only from the financial statements. The table relating to membership statistics therefore must be regarded as not completely factual. However, the figures would relate in a very general way to evidence of interest and perhaps activity. Someone once said that "The Manitowoc County Historical Society has had three resurrections." The date of each of the resurrections perhaps can be ascertained by a study of the membership data.

It appears that membership dues from 1906 to a time in the 1960's was \$1.00 a year. In 1968 the dues were increased to \$3.00 a year and in 1978 they were increased to \$5.00. So far as can be determined Oscar Richter was the first person to become a life member, the date about 1937. It is not known what the life membership fee was at that time. There were several who were given life membership status for "services rendered beyond the call of duty." Larry Geiger became a member of the Society in 1938 and became a life member in 1948 on payment of \$15. In 1954 there were 28 annual dues paying memberships and 16 were life members. Holy Family Convent paid \$15 to become a life member of the Society in 1949.

In 1981 membership of the Society was as follows:

Individual .....	\$ 5.00	284
Husband & wife .....	8.00	346
Family .....	10.00	204
Life memberships .....		113
Honorary life memberships .....		1
Student .....		8
Industrial & Commercial .....		4
		959

This was by far the largest membership in the 75-year history of this Society.

**Manitowoc County  
Historical Society Membership  
1935 to Date**

NOTE: There were no statistics from which information about membership could be ascertained from 1906 until 1935. The membership statistics in some years following can be only approximate. Frequently the names listed on rosters were not in agreement with financial records indicating sums received in membership fees. Usually the treasurer reported a larger membership than the roster indicated. The larger figures usually are given in the table which follows:

Membership fees set at \$1.00 a year in 1906. It remained at that figure until 1968.

1936 .....	66
1937 .....	53*
1938 .....	85

# Manitowoc County Historical Society Membership (continued)

1939.....	76
1940.....	66
1941.....	79
1942.....	94
1943.....	88
1944.....	82
1945.....	81
1946.....	69**
1947.....	194
1948.....	120***
1949.....	74
1950.....	70
1951.....	28
1952.....	
1953.....	
1954.....	28****
1955.....	
1956.....	
1957.....	
1958.....	
1959.....	
1960.....	
1961.....	51
1962.....	
1963.....	
1964.....	31
1965.....	34
1966.....	31
1967.....	138
1968.....	175*****
1969.....	253
1970.....	370
1971.....	404
1972.....	432
1973.....	438
1974.....	470
1975.....	497
1976.....	527
1977.....	657
1978.....	561*****
1979.....	595
1980.....	659
1981.....	957*****

\* *Oscar Richter becomes Society's first life member.*

\*\* *Holy Family Convent becomes a life member.*

\*\*\* *Life membership fee is set at \$15.00. Larry Geiger becomes a life member.*

\*\*\*\* *There were 16 life members of the Society according to records of this year.*

\*\*\*\*\* *Membership fees increased to \$3.00 for an individual member, and \$25.00 for a life membership.*

\*\*\*\*\* *Individual membership increased to \$5.00; family membership to \$8.00 and life membership to \$100.*

\*\*\*\*\* *There now are 113 life members in the Society.*

## MANITOWOC COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Address of Communications To:

**NEWSLETTER**  
1115 North 18th Street  
Manitowoc, Wisconsin 54220



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