



The Negaunee Historical Society

Quarterly Newsletter

October 2019

Issue #50

From the president...

Hello and welcome to Fall! Yes, the changing season is upon us. Where did the summer go? Seems like it would never get here, and it's now in the history books.



Despite the rebuilding of Brown Avenue, which was torn up for most of the summer, we were able to host the Business After Hours in June and the annual Ice Cream Social in July. The Pioneer Days parade was routed along Main Street and passed in front of the museum. There were a lot of people there to view the parade and our porch rocking chairs were fully occupied. Pioneer Days enhance the value of a small town; friends gathering to celebrate both the heritage and future of the City. Miles Parkkonen was our honored representative in the parade, and Virginia Paulson and volunteers staffed the museum.

Pat Johnson, Donna Gravedoni-Bjork and Theresa Rinehart organized the annual home tour, which featured three historic houses and the Negaunee Fire Hall. A special thanks to Beth's Cake Creations, Super One Foods, Range Bank, Globe Printing and the entire team that made this event successful!

You'll note that Roland Koski has handed off the newsletter to Virginia Paulson. A hug THANK YOU to Roland, who gave tirelessly of his time in producing the last 50 newsletters! Future newsletters will feature articles about neighborhood memories. So dig out your old pictures and drop us a line with a story about your neighborhood, and we'll begin this journey! Thanks to Dave Savolainen for this idea; it should be fun! Enjoy the beautiful season ahead of us and stay in touch.

—Art Gischia, society president

Kirkwood demolition stirs memories

Due to the structural instabilities identified in May 2019 at the Kirkwood Block, the City of Negaunee determined the building needed to come down to ensure the safety of the residents and visitors to the City of Negaunee.

On June 17, a temporary fence was erected on the north driving lane, north parking lane and north sidewalk of Iron Street after the City Council unanimously passed a resolution during their regular June meeting to do so.

As of June 26, an order of demolition was sent to property owner Eric Miljour (NHS Class of 1994).

The City proceeded with demolition, despite resistance from the owner, beginning in September.

The building's namesake, Philip Boys Kirkwood, was one of Negaunee's oldest and most prominent citizens. A native of Ireland, he was born in Dublin on November 26, 1842.



Soon after, he completed his education at Nutgrove School near Dublin, P.B. Kirkwood decided to cast his fortune to America.

In the store of one of the pioneer druggists of Wisconsin, he laid the foundation for his career as a pharmacist. The Upper Peninsula of Michigan was then attracting much attention, and Mr. Kirkwood joined the many who were eager to learn what the new region had to offer. Before coming to Negaunee, he lived in Escanaba and was employed as a clerk in the service of the Chicago & North Western Railway.

He came to Negaunee and secured a position in the drug store of the late Dr. L.C. Cyr. He purchased an interest; but, after a couple of years, relinquished it in order to carry out his cherished idea of seeing the Far West. He spent a short time in California, and then determined he would enter the drug store business in Negaunee.

Mr. Kirkwood was among the city's earliest mayors, serving his first term

Continued on back cover



From the Negaunee Iron Herald...

In 1928, Dr. Burke sees a need for a new city hospital and has purchased the Crane residence on Cyr Street. It will be remodeled into a modern institution. It became known as the Twin City Hospital. Dr. Knutson came to Negaunee in 1938, and was associated with Dr. Burke. Upon Dr. Burke's retirement, Dr. Knutson operated the Twin City Hospital, which later was converted to a convalescent home. In 1954, Dr. Knutson transferred his office from the Railo Building and opened a new office and clinic on Croix Street. In 1957, Dr. Knutson converted the Davidson home in Palmer and established the Palmer Nursing Home.

- **1875:** Local mines are paying \$150 a day.
- **1889:** Negaunee has formed a rugby team, it's called football.
- **1889:** John Smith has built a set of steps from Mill Street to his home on top of Teal Lake Bluff.
- **Fall 1909:** One more first grade classroom opened up at Park Street School in order to limit all class sizes to no more than 40 students.
- **1909:** The inspector of mines annual stats reported that from 13 mines, 23 men were killed, including 13 Finns, four English, four Italians, one Swede and one German. Eleven men were from Negaunee.

A Model Structure: Still Standing

The finishing touches on the new building at the corner of Pioneer Avenue and Main Street are now being done. It is to be occupied as the local headquarters of the Iron Cliffs Company.

The company is the possessor of more than 40,000 acres of land, on which several mines are located. Due to the volume of paperwork for the company and not having to rent vaults for said items, the decision was made to build on the lot noted, which had been reserved many years for this purpose, and is one of the handsomest buildings in town.

The description of this building states that its foundation wall is three feet thick, laid in cement mortar, and from this to the roof, the wall is of red Buffalo brick and Portage stone with Marquette brownstone for a combination of color. The frame and the ceilings are of iron and lath, with a slate roof. The structure is practically fireproof.



The rooms have circular corrugated iron ceilings and hardwood floors, plastered walls, Norway wainscoting finished with oil. The first floor has a spacious vault, elegant fireplace with a marble mantel and tile hearth. The second floor also has a vault and fireplace.

The exterior is of English and French style architecture with a mansard roof and a gable over the front entrance. It is without a doubt the most elegant in the Peninsula. It will be finished off with a handsome wrought iron fence.

It will stand as a monument to the company whose money built it. It is an ornament that will long endure.

Editor's Note: This article was paraphrased from the December 22, 1887 issue of the Negaunee Iron Herald. This building is now the administration office of the Negaunee Public Schools with the inside description still intact.

100 Years Ago

Late in the afternoon of April 25, 1919, a fire completely destroyed St. Paul Catholic Church. Arrangements were made to have Mass at the Adelphi roller rink and the fire hall. Father Joseph Dittman moved into a small dwelling on Kanter Street, while plans were made to construct a new church and rectory.

In 1919 the cornerstone was laid for the present church and many parishioners pledged special gifts, but the majority of the construction costs was financed from royalty funds collected from the mining company on each ton of ore that was mined, pursuant to an agreement arrived at in 1904.

St. Paul Church originally was on the corner of Brown Avenue and Case Street. The Catholic cemetery was located near the church. The old church was sold for \$1,000 and cut in two and formed the shells of two private dwellings that still stand today.

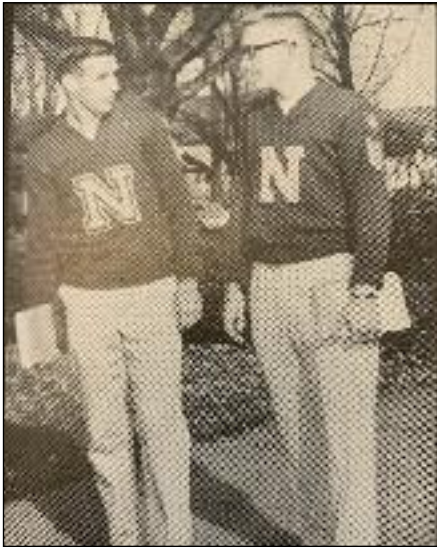


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1959 Alumni



Negaunee High School football players Bob Piziali, Most Valuable Back, and Alan Hendrickson, Most Valuable Lineman. Piziali chose a career with the State Police and Hendrickson served as a Lutheran pastor.

Negaunee Historical Society Donation Form

P.O. Box 221, Negaunee, MI 49866-0221

_____ \$10 Yearly Membership _____ \$100 Lifetime Membership

_____ \$5 Annual Student Membership _____ General Donation

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Please include your email address if you would like the newsletter via email:

Thank You!

IN THE MUSEUM

Buried forest discovered in October 1976

Located two and a half miles east of the mining community of Palmer, an ancient forest buried about 10,000 years ago by glacial activity was discovered.

The area was formerly part of the Sands Plains and was excavated by the Cleveland Cliffs Iron Company when scooping out a tailings basin.

The forest was discovered by Russel Mattson, the operator of earth-moving equipment, who reported striking trees 25 to 30 feet below the surface.

Dr. John Hughes, an earth scientist, and John Meier of CCI went out in December to examine the findings, but the bitter cold prevented them from further study. Dr. W. James Merry, a botanist, was brought into the project.

By the end of Summer 1977, the investigators observed a grove of spruce and tamarack up to two feet in diameter that had been standing for about 130 to 150 years when they became covered by the glacier.

The Gribben Basin Forest is one of the outstanding discoveries of the cen-



turies, and is located right in our backyard.

Editor's Note: For more information on this topic, visit the Negaunee Historical Museum, where one of the trees is on display.

A&W Root Beer is 100 years old

Jack Taylor, former Negaunee basketball coach and teacher, opened the A&W drive-in restaurant on US-41 where Snyder Drug is now located in Negaunee.

Don Mourand, former superintendent of Negaunee Schools and Bob Marietti, educator in Ishpeming, later purchased the business ending in the late 1990s. Many teens earned their summer wages as "carhops," flipping hamburgers, pouring root beer, and of course, scooping up those famous turtle sundaes.

On any night of the week, you would see carloads of Little League baseball players getting their free root beer after the game.



Negaunee Historical Society
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Kirkwood demolition stirs memories (cont)



weeks in the woods each year.

Mr. Kirkwood was engaged in business in Negaunee until 1907, when he was forced to retire on account of ill health. He passed away at home on July 27, 1907.

All attempts were made to save the nameplate and buttons on the front of the building for historical purposes, keeping in mind the safety of the demolition crew. As of print time, the crew was hopeful that the nameplate was secured.

*—Compiled from historical issue
and a City press release*

in 1877, four years after the adoption of the municipal charter. It was during his first term that the city's waterworks system was established.

It was during his subsequent term that the municipal lighting system took form. In all, he served the city as mayor for six terms and also held other positions. He also served in county government and the school board.

Until advancing years made him less hardy, Mr. Kirkwood was an enthusiastic sportsman and managed to spend a few



Museum Information

303 East Main Street
P.O. Box 221
Negaunee, MI 49866
(906)475-4614

Fall & Winter hours:
By appointment only

negauneehistorical@att.net
www.negauneehistory.org

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