



# MENOMINEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter

VOL1. No. 75

Katherine Murwin, *Editor* Spring 2025

### COMING EVENTS

#### **CALL for CLEANERS**

(come and go)

All skills welcome, variety of jobs

Sat. May 10 from 9 a.m.-12 p.m.

#### **Museum OPEN Memorial Day to Labor Day**

Mon., Wed., Fri., and Sat. from 9-12

#### **Special outstanding displays:**

Menominee Indian artifacts from Hayward

Lake Area collected over a lifetime, displayed

and donated by Jeffery Michael

Sports display addition to include Blesch

Field highlights and stadium remnants.

#### **GREETER ORIENTATION**

May 20, 2025 (Tues.)

Anuta Research Center at 10:00 a.m.

#### **ANUTA RESEARCH CENTER**

Opening on Wednesday, June 4th

Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. all Wed.

Research assistance available by

e-mailing: [anutaresearch@yahoo.com](mailto:anutaresearch@yahoo.com)

or calling 715-506-2735

Visitors welcome (bound local newspapers,

High school annuals, photographs and

local historic documents to browse)-

#### **JOIN an ADVENTURE JOIN the SOCIETY**

Please consider a membership in the Menominee County Historical Society.

(donation form on the last page of newsletter)

Please encourage others to join. Help by promoting the Society and its Mission to preserve our history and historic places for the benefit and enjoyment of all.

We offer a great and authentic story beginning thousands of years ago with our indigenous people, our discovery with the arrival of explorers in 1634, and the development and growth into communities while nurturing the natural environment.

Our history can be explored and enjoyed while visiting our Heritage Museum with new featured displays yearly. The Anuta

Research Center's bound newspapers from the very earliest days make for great browsing, too. The Lighthouse views and sea breezes are relaxing.

Chapsee Rapids Learning Center is a natural site on the Menominee River to hike. Have a picnic at the Menominee Township Park at Birch Creek and learn about the Peshtigo Fire there.

Watch for news of many special events planned for 2025.



### **Boats as Old as the Pyramids**

My sister and I (Katherine) spent my 2024 birthday in Egypt awed by Cairo and standing before the Giza Pyramids and the Sphinx. This was followed by a ride on a Cleopatra-style vessel for a sumptuous lunch on the Nile. It was a dream come true. It was time to adjust to reality upon returning home several days before Christmas.

One of the chores to tackle is the amount of mail to sort. In a moment of respite I dived into my favorite magazine, the new copy of (January-February) Smithsonian. It was very exciting to discover the first article entitled "Diving for History" told of Tamara Thomsen and her discovery of an ancient dugout canoe. She is a maritime archaeologist who works for the Wisconsin Historical Society but who happened to be privately enjoying diving in Lake Mendota near Madison, Wisconsin in the summer of 2021. She discovered the dugout constructed of great white oak carved over 1,200 years ago peeking out of a sand ridge under 24 feet of water. She did not grasp the scope of the find at the time. She is usually searching for 19th century freighter shipwrecks and not extremely old hollowed out logs some as-old as the pyramids.

But as luck would have it, she had experience with another archaeologist from the University of Wisconsin Madison, Sissel Schroeder, as they were helping a student catalog dugout canoes. At the time historians believed there were only 11 in existence as part of collections in the State. The next year they found 34 were held by museums, supper clubs, private collectors, etc.

After Tamara's find the two women decided to hunt for more. They also formed a group they called the Wisconsin Dugout Canoe Survey Project. They have now located and documented 79 of them. Two of them are the oldest found in eastern North America aging from 4,000 and 5,000 years old. In addition, there is lots to be learned from the discoveries. A Ho-Chunk tribal leader who serves as a tribal historic preservation officer shared the Madison area was known as Dejope and was an interconnected society. It is a misconception that they had temporary villages scattered around. Carving the canoes was a community occasion. Men carved with stones or shell tools. It could take some time to complete one. They were kept along the shore for everyone to use.

The article written by Jacqueline Kehoe continues to share more interesting information. It has spurred me to research the canoes that our Heritage Museum acquired and to contact those involved with the described research. Perhaps we can help each other.

My lesson learned is that I don't have to travel to Egypt if I wish to gaze upon some of the oldest constructions on earth it may be that I can visit the Museum in my City I encourage you to watch for information regarding the creation of a dugout by the Menominee Indians.

They will be gathering in May for a celebration including a stop at Chappée Rapids. We have been informed that the public is invited to watch them as they make a canoe.



**Dugout Canoe**

### **Question:**

Who is considered the "Father of the Menominee Range" because he and his exploration party discovered and mined iron ore in the area that became known as Vulcan, Michigan ?

Answer: See page 6

By Katherine Murwin

Your editor's wandering readings have led to the discovery of amazing information regarding the advancement of postal service in the early Upper Peninsula and Menominee County in particular. This collection of stories is quite amazing when joined together. I am not inclined to write a book about the development of the U.P. postal system although it would be entertaining. Suffice it to say it is rewarding to find assorted stories that fit conveniently together toward a specific topic.

It is relevant to remember that the first three white men arrived in Menominee in 1830. The population was extremely small in 1863 when E.S. Ingalls became editor of the Menominee Herald.

The first mail contract route in 1845 extended into Lake Superior regions. Mail was delivered by packing, sometimes boats, then horses and dog trains depending on the seasons. The mail was packaged in Green Bay and brought to Menominee, Wisconsin where the post master brought it to Menominee. However, during the summer it was delivered by "boats" stopping here. The boats included the first Steamer Queen City and later by the Queen City and Union. During this time the mail arrived three times in the winter and six times in the summer.

Menominee received its mail at facilities with the mail contract of 1862 to 1866. It was noted elsewhere that the first post master was Norman Soles (Soule) as of May 23, 1863. The office location was in a house later occupied by John Quimby, Sr. moving several times later. It is noted that as late as 1864 there were no roads or streets for public use. E.S. Ingalls authorized then contracted and built the State Road from Menominee to Escanaba in 1865. Source: Sketches of the Menominee River by Lewis S. Patrick [April 1871 (reissued 1975)]

An interesting obituary appeared in the Herald Leader on April 8, 1921 entitled OLDEST MAN IN THE COUNTY DIES AT NADEAU John Bowdoin, 100 Years Old, Carried Mail in the Peninsula By Dog Sleds.

John's story relates that at his death at home he remained a "hale and hearty" man who supposedly weighed 200 pounds and had only been sick a few hours before death. He was born in a place existing between Green Bay and De Pere known as Schwane Town. Not much is known of him. He operated the first post system between Green Bay and Marquette when the iron ranges opened in the Upper Peninsula. He made the trip about three times a year using dog teams on the long "trek". He supposedly told stories that at that time Green Bay consisted of one house and a few buildings in Fort Howard. The Upper Peninsula was a wilderness. He had lived in Nadeau Township for many years and known throughout Menominee County.

It appears possible that John Bowdoin was one of the first mail carriers.

A third "story" is taken from a letter written by Louis Nadeau dated March 17, 1935 (from Seattle, Washington) to Gene Worth, editor of the Herald-Leader. Mr. Worth had asked him to write his memories of his early years in Menominee County. Mr. Nadeau stated that his recollections date to 1871.

Interestingly, he states that his wife's father, J. R. Brooks was selected to lay out the Green Bay and Bay De Noc Road north from Menominee in 1864. (Referred to in the first story as the State Road.)

The letter covers considerable information regarding his family connections with lumbering, railroad and road building, the Peshtigo Fire, farming, and other relevant progress in the County.

The following is information Louis shared about the post office established in 1880 at Nadeau. Barney Nadeau, Sr., his father, was the first post master. He served many years before he lost his sight. (He also served as a first Highway Commissioner and a first supervisor of the township he managed to define.) A note was added to the letter by Howard E. Nadeau regarding the Daggett (railroad Section 25) post office. Mrs. Clara Daggett Faulkner was the first postmaster of the office given her maiden name. No one by the name of Daggett ever lived there. Source Letter entitled MENOMINEE COUNTY HISTORICAL NOTES (No. 2) presented to the Menominee County Historical Society by Howard E. Nadeau on March 4, 1968

My next "find" (fourth) reveals an item from "Looking Back in The Journal Files" from the November 10, 2005 issue of the Menominee County Journal dated November 18, 1955. Robert Woessner died. He had been a mail carrier for more than 38 years beginning in 1909. He would tell of using a horse and buggy to deliver mail. Later, he was the first carrier to use a Ford snowmobile. He was born and lived his entire life in the village of Stephenson.

The next tidbit also comes from the Journal. This appeared originally on August 17, 1951, Stephenson: "The Senate voted to raise the postal card rate from three to four cents. Letter rates did not increase. However, air mail will go from six to eight cents. "It appears that obituaries appearing in the Herald-Leader in the 1950's of postal workers took the opportunity to relate what is now historically significant information regarding postal service development. Such an obituary appeared on October 25, 1954 upon the death of former assistant postmaster James Roland Evans at age 85.

Mr. Evans came to Menominee at age 20 in 1889 and hired as a postal clerk, a position he served continuously until he retired in 1934. At that time the staff consisted of a postmaster, a clerk and two workers who sorted the mail. Patrons took letters to the office to post them and pick up mail as there was no carrier delivery.

The workers' day began at 7 a.m. and often didn't end until 11:00 p.m. The mail from the daily 10 p.m. train had to be sorted for patrons who were waiting for it.

Evans was promoted to mail dispatcher and appointed assistant post master in 1913 from which he retired in 1934 after serving for 43 years. [Yes, he was the father who helped develop son, Frank, "Diddy", (City Assessor) into a great local left handed baseball pitcher.]

To be continued



## THE ADVENT OF MINING IN THE UPPER PENINSULA: Copper and Iron

The story of mining in the Upper Peninsula is complicated and ongoing to this day. It was long known that copper existed. It wasn't until fall 1844 that a large amount of iron ore was found. This was due- to- the fact that iron was in the form of ore, merely heavy rocks.

The U.P. iron was discovered by William A. Burt who was working as a deputy surveyor under Douglass Houghton. They were assigned to run township lines in the Upper Peninsula. Burt was working near present day Negaunee when his compass would not work properly. He instructed his assistants to discover why. They all returned with pieces of iron ore.

Luckily, Burt had invented a solar compass. It made it possible to use the sun to determine direction when the magnetic compass became unreliable. It became necessary to use the solar to complete the work.

This area, rich with iron ore, became known as the Marquette Range. Exploration, investment, and mining of iron ore became a major part of the development of the Upper Peninsula.

In 1847, the pine forests and hunting lands of the Chippewa were surveyed. By the late 70s "...the wonderful richness of the Menominee River country..." and the discovery of ore by the Breen Brothers at Waucedah (Iron County) caused explorers and adventurers to descend on what became the Menominee Range. From Waucedah up the Menominee River to Vulcan, Quennebec, Iron Mountain to Florence, "...each in its turn served as the advance post of civilization in the Menominee wilderness." (See Question.)

Sources: History of Iron County, Michigan by Thomas Conlin and Michigan in Four Centuries by F. Clever Bald (1954)

### Question:

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Answer: See page 6



**ByeLines**  
by Larry Ebsch

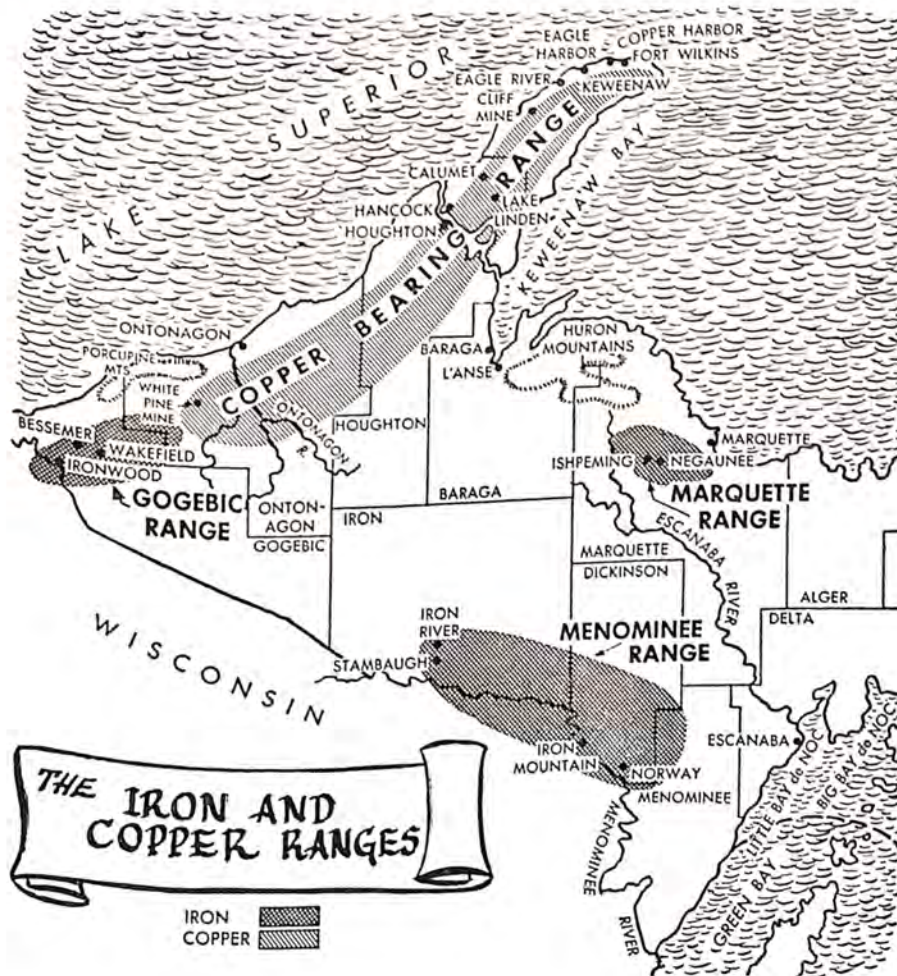
## ONE LAST TRIBUTE TO LARRY EBSCH

By Katherine Murwin

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Larry Ebsch. Larry was a special friend of the Menominee County Historical Society greatly assisting in our Mission to preserve our history for all to enjoy. His published work is well known and extensive.

His newspaper career spanned 41 years as he held various positions from a sports reporter to the executive editor of the Eagle-Herald at retirement. He continued writing features until the time of his death. He was also engaged in other noteworthy endeavors.

As a well-known and skilled local newspaper reporter he recorded the history of Menominee in sports and community life through time. He researched and authored copious articles and special features recording the stories of the people and events of Menominee. He shared his work in a story telling manner that brought an exciting edge to our history. The Society now preserves his extensive archives; left for future generations to read, learn and enjoy.



### Answer to Membership question:

"Father of the Menominee Range" was Lewis Young Whitehead. At twenty-nine he led a group looking for iron ore in 1872. They built a camp (bunk house, dining room, smith shop and office) and were mining during 1873. Born in New Jersey, he was foreman of Hurd Town mine (nineteen). He came to Chicago and engaged in many occupations before arriving in Menominee on May 15, 1856 to work for the New York Lumber Co. By 1860 he became extensively involved in mining operations around the Upper Peninsula.

### CHANGING YOUR ADDRESS?

### HAVE ANY NEWS, STORIES OR PICTURES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SUBMIT FOR THE NEWSLETTER?

mail to:  
**Menominee County  
Historical Society**  
P.O. Box 151  
Menominee, MI 49858

## MENOMINEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### *Invites You to Join*

Membership is open to any person, business or organization interested in the history of Menominee County. Membership is annual.

You will be added as a member for this year upon paying any membership level and completing this Membership Form.

Friend	\$20.00	Couples	\$30.00
Supporter	\$25.00	Contributor	\$50.00
Patron	\$100.00	Benefactor	\$250.00
Life above	\$500.00	Heritage	\$1000.00 or

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ email \_\_\_\_\_

### *Mail to:*

Menominee County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 151, Menominee Michigan 49858

## MENOMINEE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### 2023 OFFICERS

Executive Director	Mike Kaufman
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Amber Polzin	Anuta Center
Abigail Hoijer	Museum Curator

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE! [www.menomineehistory.org](http://www.menomineehistory.org)