

The Negaunee Historical Society
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Negaunee, MI 49866 (906-475-4614)
SEPTEMBER 2017 NEWSLETTER - #43

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FROM THE PRESIDENT, Virginia Paulson



It's September, and how fast the summer season goes by. So far this past year, our visitors numbered 528. They came from the states of Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Nevada, North Carolina, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin and also from Africa, Germany and Mongolia.

The Model A Club had a car show for us again this year. We thank Jim Penrose for setting this up. Visitors could enjoy ice cream sundaes on the porch. It is a popular event.

One of our visitors, Tom Makela (Class of 1960), made a comment about the number of Negaunee graduates who have served as Superintendent of Schools. Because I always have an interest in educational information about Negaunee schools, I asked him if he would provide me with a list of names. This is the list I have with the year that each graduated from NHS or St. Paul but it may not be complete. If someone has any other names, we would appreciate you notifying us.

<i>Robert Northey (1935)</i> <i>Negaunee</i>	<i>Donald Uitto (1941)</i> <i>Champion</i>	<i>Allan Dighera (1952-St. P)</i> <i>Kingsford</i>	<i>Stephen Ellis (1953)</i> <i>Trenary</i>
<i>Allen Ahola (1954)</i> <i>Gwinn</i>	<i>David Harju (1955)</i> <i>Gwinn</i>	<i>William Hyry (1957)</i> <i>NICE</i>	<i>Thomas Makela (1960)</i> <i>Indian River</i>
<i>James Verley (1960)</i> <i>Kingsford</i>	<i>Alvar Kurin (1961)</i> <i>Rock River/Limestone</i>	<i>Gary Kemp (1962)</i> <i>Lowell, MI</i>	<i>Louis Guizzetti (1963-St P)</i> <i>Leslie, MI</i>
<i>Michael Maino (1965)</i> <i>Gwinn</i>	<i>Alan Kantola (1966)</i> <i>Brimley/Engadine</i>	<i>Daniel Skewis (1990)</i> <i>Negaunee</i>	



We thank everyone who volunteered and we look forward to another successful season next year.

VIRGINIA PAULSON

THANKS FOR SUPPORTING YOUR MUSEUM!



**With Honor & Gratitude
We Remember**

Remembering Negaunee's 249 World War Veterans 1917-2017

With research done from the Negaunee VFW records, the "Iron Herald" newspapers and my cemetery records, Negaunee's involvement in World War I an estimated 249 veteran burials are in the Negaunee cemetery. It's impossible to honor each of these brave men individually but I have included a short bio on Negaunee's first youth to pay the supreme sacrifice,

John H. Mitchell. I also included Oral "Moose" LaCombe who was the last surviving member of the WWI drum and bugle corps. Finally, I have added a picture of veterans being welcomed home to Palmer. For more information on our brave WWI veterans, stop by the museum and watch a 15 minute DVD presentation of memories from that war.

PFC JOHN H. MITCHELL

(July 20, 1893 - August 10, 1918)

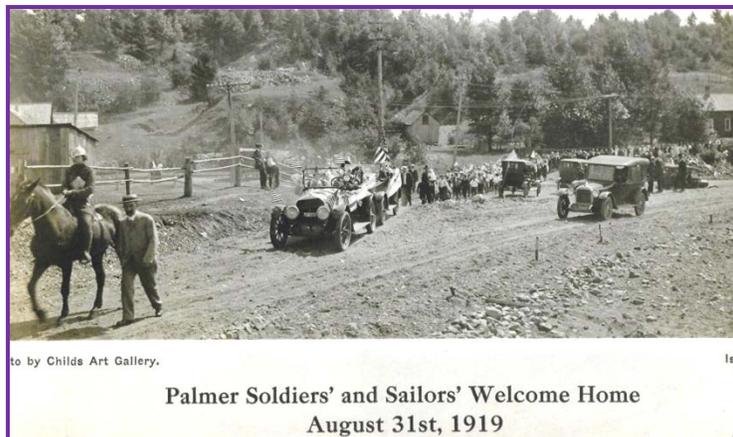
PFC John H. Mitchell (23) was killed in action in France. He thus became the first Negaunee youth to pay the supreme sacrifice in World War I. He was born on July 20, 1895 and entered the service on September 8, 1917. John was KIA during the Battle of Vesle River in France.

His body was returned to Negaunee almost 3 years later and the funeral was conducted on June 19, 1921. A soldier escort was with the body on its final journey from Hoboken, NJ, and he remained here until after the funeral. The remains were moved to city hall with a guard of honor on duty where it laid in state up to the hour of the funeral. Some 150 members of the American Legion paid tribute to his memory. The American Legion Building (John H Mitchell Post No. 66) was named in his honor. Located on the corner of Main Street and Brown Avenue, the building is presently owned by Negaunee Historical Society and is used as our museum.

ORAL "MOOSE" LACOMBE JR

(February 19, 1896 - February 14, 1993)

Oral was born in Negaunee on February 19, 1896 where he received his nickname. The doctor turned to his dad and said "He's a big moose" and that name became symbolic. He dropped out of school and worked as a plumber until the war broke out. He was a U.S. Army veteran of World War I and was the last surviving member of the World War I Drum and Bugle Corps.



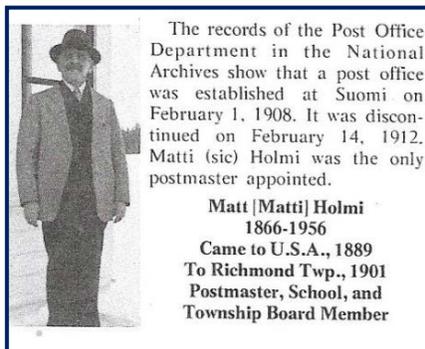
SUOMI LOCATION aka: "UUSI SUOMI"

Note: Our President, Virginia Paulson, should be very familiar with this article

"Uusi Suomi" (Little Finland), located midway between Palmer and Gwinn (3.5 miles south of Palmer), is now call Suomi Location. Andrew Isaacson has the distinction of being "Uusi Suomi's" first settler. His home was a mud dugout located on the banks of Schweister Creek. The early settlers were farmers but some also worked in the mines and at the Larson Sawmill. Fish and wild game helped to keep the family larders full. Johnson, Kangas, Korpi, Kultalahti, Lahti, Larson, Lemberg, Moilainen and Pyykkonen were some of the names of early settlers.



Sanomalehti
UUSI SUOMI

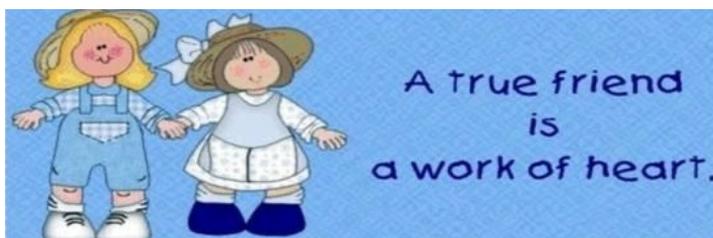


A one-room schoolhouse was built in 1905 across the road from the Lutheran Church which was organized in 1910. Miljour was the 1st non-Finnish family that moved in from the Perkins area. Logging and spruce bough cutting provided employment from time to time. Most of the logging hauls were made to Palmer but some were also made to Princeton and Gwinn. The records in the Post Office National Archives show that a post office was established at Suomi on February 1, 1908 but was discontinued on February 14, 1912. Matt (Matti) Holmi was the only postmaster appointed.

The groundwork for the present M-35 linking Suomi with Palmer and Gwinn commenced in the 1920's. It was once a rut and gravel road that was maintained by private parties under local government control at a rate of 15 cents per mile. When the county took over the road project, employees were housed in shacks located on the site of the John Larson farm along with stables for the horses. The cement bridges over Schweitzer and Warner Creeks were constructed in 1920 and the road was blacktopped for the first time in 1928. Electricity was introduced in 1935 after residents started a petition drive in 1930. Early rates were \$2.00 for 4 rooms and 40 cents for additional rooms. Telephone service was introduced in 1949 and street lights were installed in 1963. Larson's Store (1941-1960) and Miljour Marine (1958-1965) operated while a Suomi playground was promoted by local men in 1959 on land donated by the Swante Moilanen family.



This store was operated by John F Jr. and Sanna Larson (Virginia Paulson's parents)



“PAINTER” THE UMPIRE HIT BY BRICK

“Negaunee Iron Herald” – 30SEP1910



Looking at the old newspapers, I came across an interesting article during a baseball game between Negaunee and Escanaba at Escanaba in 1910. By the way, the report was sent to the “Negaunee Iron Herald” by the “Crystal Falls Diamond Drill” newspaper. The name of the umpire assaulted was from Negaunee and only the last name of Harris was given. I remembered Stanley Harris (nicknamed “Painter”) because he umpired a softball game at LaCombe Field when my team played KI Sawyer back around 1969. He would have been 18 years old when he umpired that baseball game in 1910. Some parts of the article:

“An Escanaba fanatic threw a brick at Harris when he was going back to the team’s special train after the game. The brick hit him on the head and laid him out cold so that he had to be carried the balance of the distance to the station. The Escanaba papers intimated that Harris was drunk and that a fall caused his injury in their next day story. However, the informant was a gentleman from Crystal Falls who witnessed the assault but could not identify the person throwing the brick. The affair was not promoted by the Escanaba team or management, the stunt being pulled off by a rowdy fan and the act was condemned by the better element of the Escanaba people.”

GIFTS, DONATIONS AND TIME

(Since our June newsletter)



Dave/Lynn Chevrette- 5-tier bookcase

Ron Kauppila/Kris Kaski- monetary gift

Mary Zavitz – several Negaunee newspaper clippings

Greg Montgomery – Barnes-Hecker Mine tragedy CD

Miles Parkkonen- jumbo cards for jumbo cribbage board

Rachel Pentinmaki Hirvonen – Edna Thomas Memorial gift

Sarah Maitland Bosken- album of early Negaunee residents

Michael Legacy- old savings bank engraved with 1st National Bank

Helen/Robert Saari – NHS band & orchestra recording and yearbooks

Aquarius Art Ventures (Tamara Niemi) – newly made historical post cards

Lani Duquette – toys from 40’s-50’s, NHS school books, pens, scrapbooks, etc

Paul Gravedoni – 4 DVD recorders with searchable “Iron Herald” papers 1873-1967

Steve Pellinen- military uniform, mannequin and misc items belonging to Leslie Koski

Marilyn/Ronald Laitinen family – camera, survey compass, CCI safety helmet, scrapbooks



(Note: If your name was omitted from this list, please notify us so we can acknowledge your commitment)

**WELCOME TO OUR WEBSITE –
TAKE A MOMENT AND VISIT US AT
WWW.NEGAUNEEHISTORY.ORG**

BUFFALO BILL CODY ROOMS AT BREITUNG HOTEL

**Buffalo
Bill**

How many of us have heard of William F. Cody (aka: Buffalo Bill)? Better yet, those that remember his name would be astonished to know that Buffalo Bill actually visited Negaunee. When you visit our museum, you can see the original Log Book for the Breitung Hotel with the signature of Honorable William F. Cody (Buffalo Bill) and \$7.00 payment for his room dated October 31, 1880. Buffalo Bill was born in Iowa in 1845 in a family of 8 children. At the age of 9, he became part of the company that established the Pony Express. In fact, he became the youngest pony express rider in 1860 at the age of 15. In 1868, he contracted with the railroad to supply buffalo meat for the workers and claimed to have killed 4,280 bison in 18 months, thus given the nickname "Buffalo Bill". He was elected to the Nebraska Legislature in 1872 but resigned one year later and headed east to become an actor. After his visit to Negaunee in 1880, he established the Old Wild West show which included Annie Oakley, Wild Bill Hickcock and Chief Sitting Bull. His show had outstanding success but Buffalo Bill was a poor money manager and died penniless in Denver, Colorado and was buried on top of Lookout Mountain.



CHAOS IN CITY CHAMBERS – 65 YEARS AGO **COUNCIL MEMBERS TAKE OFF GLOVES?**

(Excerpts from "Negaunee Iron Herald" September 19, 1952)



After two years, City Manager Henry L. Levens resigned and a stormy council session followed. Paul Ollila and Oliver Maki then made a motion to retain Levens because they believed that the new manager type of government was making great progress for the community. Then Robert DeGabriele said the council could have his resignation. Then Everett Reichel also left the meeting to join DeGabriele. The gavel of Mayor George Sivula continued to bang away, but the motion never came to a vote. Levens had been ill because of the pressures of his job and he was also scheduled to get a \$500.00 deduction in pay in the next budget.

CEMETERY TOUR SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

The Cemetery Tour is scheduled for Sunday, September 24th beginning at 1:00pm weather permitting. The cemetery burial lots are located on the Catholic side this year and in the northeast section to make it a lot easier for visitors to walk to and hear the stories of more Negaunee pioneers. Stories will be given for Nick Laughlin (businessman, school board), Mary Reidy (1st white girl born), Philius Bernard (barber), Remillard brothers (drowning on Teal Lake), James Foley (Foley House 1st brick building), Miss Sezerine Wellet (1st city librarian), Lennart Villberg (drowning in Lake Superior), and Oral "Moose" LaCombe (WWI vet and "Father of Softball"). Refreshments will be served and there will be a free will donation for the tour.



EIGHTY YEARS AGO

July 23, 1937 - The new Marquette County Airport is dedicated.

August 27, 1937 - The city, in order to operate in July and August had to borrow money from the First National Bank of Negaunee. Delinquent tax-payers must pay by August 31.

SEVENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

August 28, 1942 - The Palmer High School is closing and about 60 students will be transferred to Negaunee.

SEVENTY YEARS AGO

August 20, 1947 - Fatal airplane crash In Negaunee Township involved two men from Ann Arbor, MI. They were flying in an airplane traveling from Munising to Superior, Wisconsin when they struck a tree and crashed on US-41 in Negaunee Township.

SIXTY-FIVE YEARS AGO

July 31, 1952 - Tracy Mine being built and completion set for December 1953.

July 31, 1952 - Police Chief Arne Pynnonen has asked the council to prohibit swimming and motor boating on Teal Lake. Records show that there is an ordinance against swimming.

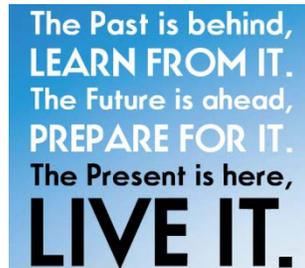
August 8, 1952 - E. W. Born hired as the new Negaunee Superintendent.

August 15, 1952 - Robert K. Richards appointed as the new NHS principal.

August 22, 1952 - Donald Hoff will be the new Football coach.

August 22, 1952 - Harry Sortal will be the new Basketball coach.

September 19, 1952 - CCI and Steelworkers agree on a new two-year contract. Retroactive to July 1 (when strike began), the miners will now be paid about \$1.43 an hour.



SIXTY YEARS AGO

July 26, 1957 - A marker of the Iron Ore discovery was being placed and dedicated at Maple Street and US-41. It was originally and mistakenly going to be placed in Marquette until Ishpeming and Negaunee representatives spoke to the Historical Commission about the correct location to place it.

July 26, 1957 - Work has been started to raze the home of the late George Maas located on East Main Street. With a ballroom on the third floor and swimming pool in the back yard, the property was the "show place" of Negaunee in years gone by.

July 26, 1957 - The Viga Bowling Alleys installed automatic Pin Spotters.

August 23, 1957 - One of Negaunee's oldest landmarks (the C&NW Freight depot) at the corner of Iron and Silver Streets has been abandoned and spur lines to it have been taken up. City will use the space for needed parking.

FIFTY YEARS AGO

August 3, 1967 - The new steel workers contract is going into effect with a raise of 6 cents per hour for the 2,700 CCI workers.

These historical items were collected from Bob Dobson's CD "Iron Herald Notes" from 1873-1967

`SMILES` is the longest word in the world because there is a mile between the first and last letters.



*"If nobody smiled and nobody cheered and nobody helped us along,
If every man looked after himself and good things went to the strong,
If nobody cared just a little for you and nobody thought about me,
And we all stood alone in the battle of life, what a dreary world it would
be!"* Quote by Ardes (Swanson) Williamson, circa 1927

BRASS CHECKS

What is a brass check? It was an individually numbered brass object issued to each miner. When he went on shift, each miner put his brass check in his pocket before getting into the lift to be taken below. When the miner returned to the surface to change his clothes and go home, he put his check in its proper place on the board. Periodically during the day, and especially at the end of a shift, the mine security people reviewed the board for the checks. If a brass check was missing, they immediately started searching for the missing miner. A story relates back to the late 1970's when a miner failed to return his brass check. When they searched for him, they found him pinned under a conveyor belt. He had been there for 6 hours. He may not have survived his ordeal if they had not known to search for him. Clarence "Bea" Parolini, a member of our society, was in charge of giving and receiving brass checks from the miners each day. "Bea" can still give you the name of a great many miners just by knowing their brass check number.



MONTHLY AND 32nd ANNUAL MEETING SCHEDULED



Our future monthly meetings are scheduled for Tuesday, October 3 and Tuesday, November 7 at 7:00 at the museum. The Historical Society will hold its thirty-second annual meeting on Tuesday, December 5 in the Fellowship Hall at the Immanuel Lutheran Church at 7:00pm followed by its regular monthly meeting. Election of four (4) trustees will be on the agenda as three-year terms will expire for Donna Bjork, Dave Dompierre, Virginia Paulson and Jeanne Sandstrom. Nominations can be presented at our October 3rd and November 7th meetings while additional nominations may be presented at our annual meeting. Refreshments will be served and all members are encouraged and welcome to attend.

HI-LO SLOWPITCH TEAM DOMINATED IN 1972 – 7 CHAMPIONSHIPS

The Hi-Lo Club slow pitch softball team had a season of perfection in 1972 winning 62 of 72 games played and taking home first place trophies in 7 tournaments. Unbelievable stats!!!!



Bordering the trophies were the sponsors Kenny and Donna Grenier-Johnson
Kneeling L-R: Phil Carlson, Roger Carlson, Paul Gravedoni, Jerry Gravedoni, Joe White and
Terry Koski Back row L-R: Jerry Koski, "Toodles" Lequia, Ron `Eino` Korpi, Duane Larson,
Bill Gravedoni, Jim "Boney" Carlson, Neil Carlson, Kenny Carlson and Jim Conradson

ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP - SEPTEMBER 1 287
LIFETIME MEMBERSHIPS 183
2017 MEMBERSHIPS 104

Did you forget to renew your membership this year?

You can still renew for 2017 and also continue being a member for 2018 at the regular one-year price shown below. The museum displays are being continually updated and improved for our visitors. Thank you for all the past memberships, donations, gifts, grants and to all of our volunteers. Ask a family member or friend to become a member.

(Negaunee Historical Society, P O Box 221, Negaunee, MI 49866-0221)

Lifetime - \$100.00 **2017&18** individual - \$10.00 **2017&18** student - \$5.00

Name: _____

Address: _____

City and Zip: _____

(If you would like your newsletter e-mailed to you – please give e-mail address)