

MISSION STATEMENT

Preserving the past for future generations by collecting a unique and enduring collection of Polk County history shared with the public through programs, exhibits and research.

MUSEUM HOURS

Thursday - Monday
Noon to 4pm
Open Memorial Day
Weekend
through Labor Day

ADMISSION

No fee for admission.
Donations appreciated.

120 Main Street
PO Box 41
Balsam Lake, WI
54810
715-485-9269

Email:
info@polkcountymuseum.org

HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE
ELEVATOR FOR ALL
THREE FLOORS
AIR CONDITIONED



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From the Director's Desk

The 2021 Polk County Museum season ended last week on Labor Day. I want to extend my sincere thank you to all the volunteers who spent numerous hours at the museum this season. The museum could not have been open so many days without your help!

The 2021 season at the museum started out slow with the pandemic still in high status. As we entered the month of June, the museum opened its doors and welcomed over 1,400 visitors and raised \$13,000 during the summer months. We had visitors come from as far as Thunder Bay, Canada, California, Florida, Montana, Texas, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Illinois, Michigan, and Georgia. We received numerous compliments about our exhibits, including the new Ledger Exhibit and upgraded Military Room.

Our annual membership meeting will take place on Saturday, October 9 at 4:00 PM at the Museum. We will give an overview of our 2021 season, share plans for 2022 and hold elections for officers and new board members. Following the business meeting, we will be offering a special members-only museum tour. Guides will be staged in selected rooms and will give you a history of those exhibits. The tour will end on the top floor where appetizers and beverages will be available. Please make sure your membership is up-to-date or plan to become a member -- come join the fun!

I'm excited to announce that we will be offering special museum events during our off-season. Get a sneak peek of up-coming events on the last page of this Chronicler. You can stay up to date on our events through our website, Facebook and Instagram pages. The off-season also gives our volunteers time to continue organizing our archives and responding to the numerous research requests we receive. In addition, volunteers will be working on archiving and cataloging any new donations for future use and display. Check out one of these donations, "The Tin Man", on page 4 of the Chronicler!

Thank you to all our visitors this season and we look forward to seeing you during the 2022 season!

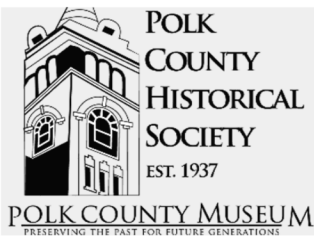
Leslie Waggoner

Polk County Museum Executive Director

Check out our
website!

www.PolkCountyMuseum.org

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram!



**MUSEUM
DIRECTOR**

Leslie Waggoner

**BOARD OF
DIRECTORS**

Greta Palmberg
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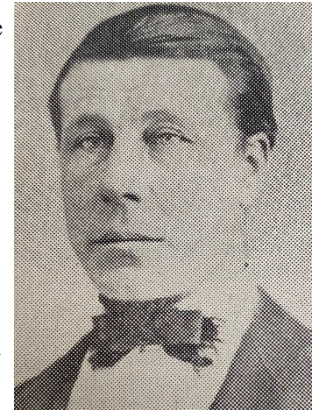
Sharon Kelly

**Board Meetings are
held the 1st
Thursday of the
month.**

Amery - An Early History

The Amery Fall Festival kicks off on September 16th. With that in mind, we thought that the early history of the City of Amery would be great to share with our readers.

Originally, the town of Amery was known as “Big Dam” after the dam that was built across the Apple River just south of County Road F. This dam was built to support the logging industry which at that point in time was the largest industry in Polk County. In 1891, the town of Amery was organized and named after William Amery, a prominent citizen of Polk County, who served as Polk County Treasurer from 1870 - 1873. An interesting fact about William Amery is that he never lived in Amery! He lived in St. Croix Falls and died in 1887. William was so respected that when a new town was being organized in 1891, Polk County honored William Amery by naming the new town after him.



William Amery (1831-1887)

Amery experienced a building boom between 1888-1893. Several lumber mills were built as well as mercantile stores, a drug store and many other businesses. The Amery Free Press was opened by M.A. Fris as the editor in 1892. The Soo line extended from Amery to Turtle Lake and a post office was established with George Griffin as the postmaster. A law office, saloons, and the “Robbins House” hotel opened. Amery organized as an official village in 1891, with Dr. Holliday as president. The Congregational Church was the first church to be built. In 1893, the school system added a new building that offered a three-year high school. By the end of the century, the first wooden water tower was built, and the Amery telephone system was created.

In the early 1900’s, an insurance company and the Danielson Drug store opened its doors. The first two banks were built. A merchandise store and rural mail route were established. In 1912, two bowling lanes were installed in a new building. Amery was organized as a city with Paul Amundson as mayor in 1919. This year also saw the heaviest rain falls in the spring, which caused the rivers and lakes to flood and overflow most of Amery, washing out all the roads except one.

In 1921, the Amery Women’s Club was organized. The spring of 1924 brought devastation to the City of Amery with a storm that dumped three feet of snow on the city and firefighters lost battles at the clothing store, studio, and Croft building. The Amery Library began operation in the old city hall located on Birch Street in 1928. In the 1930’s, Amery got their first Chief of Police, Carl Burman, and there was a bank hold up. Four masked men made off with \$47,000 from the Amery Bank. In 1936, there was a severe drought, and winter was extremely cold with deep snow.

In the 1940’s and 50’s, Amery saw a shortage of products due to the war, a tornado ripped through the city on Mother’s Day, the Polio epidemic curtailed events, and trucks replaced trains delivering the mail. Amery has gone through many changes throughout the years since it was first founded yet still continues to be a vibrant city today!

1919 Amery Flood



Amery Street Fair - Sept. 1912



Summer Fun at the Polk County Museum

4th of July Root Beer Float Fundraiser

As part of Balsam Lake's Freedom Festival held during the 4th of July weekend, we held our annual Root Beer Float Fundraiser. We raised over \$700 and served over 250 root beer floats. A huge thank you to donors Bernick's for the Root Beer, Wayne's Foods Plus for the gift certificate, Balsam Lake Brewery and Market for the ice cream, MarketPlace Foods for the gift card, and ProLawn and the Peterson Family for loaning us the ice cream machine. Also, special thanks to all the volunteers that made this fundraiser possible.



Pioneer School at the Lanesdale School

The PCHS hosted two successful sessions of the Pioneer School in August. Tammy Henderson along with her assistants helped the students experience school life in this authentic 1900's one-room schoolhouse. The children practiced reading, writing and arithmetic and enjoyed learning to make ice cream and playing old fashioned games. The sessions took place in the 1880's Lanesdale School, which was originally located in the Laketown District in Polk County, near the Town of Cushing. It was a rural schoolhouse until 1961. In January of 1964, the schoolhouse was moved to Balsam Lake and became a part of the museum complex operated by the Polk County Historical Society.



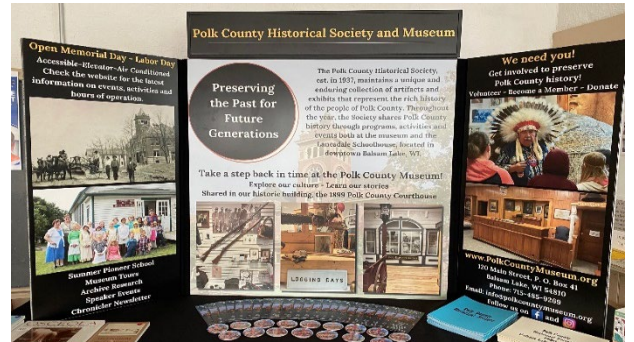
Special Museum Tours

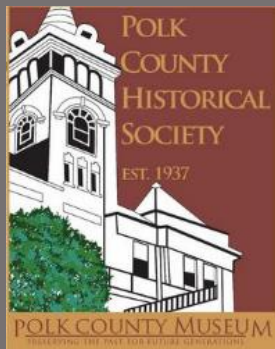
Two special museum tours featuring poet and author Sara DeLuca were a hit in July and August. The guests enjoyed 15-minute stops featuring excerpts from Sara's memoir and poetry in the Agricultural room, Railroad exhibits, School exhibits and General Store followed by informal discussion. Additional special events will be held this Fall. Steve Sylvester will be holding a "What am I?" event on September 23 and Russ Hanson will be holding a special museum tour on October 14. For more information and to buy tickets visit our website.



Polk County Museum at the Polk County Fair

The historical Little Red School House located on the Polk County Fairgrounds in St. Croix Falls was recently re-painted and a new ramp was installed. The re-model celebration took place during the 2021 Polk County Fair and all the Polk County historical societies were invited to highlight their organizations. The PCHS created a new Polk County Museum display which was unveiled at the fair to over 1,900 visitors in the Little Red School House.





PCHS UPCOMING EVENTS

Membership

Please consider joining or renewing your membership to the Polk County Historical Society!

Individual: \$15.00
 Family Annual: \$25.00
 Patron Annual: \$50.00

Click the "Donate" button on our website polkcountymuseum.org

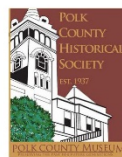
OR Mail membership dues to:

Polk County Historical Society
 PO Box 41, Balsam Lake, WI 54810

Polk County Historical Society



is honored to present
 OUR ANNUAL FUNDRAISING EVENT



WWII A SALUTE TO THE GREATEST GENERATION

HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED FROM POLK COUNTY

NOVEMBER 13, 2021
 BROWTINE EVENT CENTER

1361 100TH STREET AMERY, WI 54001

4:30PM - 11:00PM
 COCKTAILS • DINNER • DANCING • ENTERTAINMENT

MUSIC PROVIDED BY

THE CLASSIC BIG BAND & "THE NOSTALGIC QUARTET"

A 17-piece 1940's style swing band, and vocal quartet that will take you back to the era of Glen Miller, Tommy Dorsey, Benny Goodman, and Gene Krupa.

GUEST SPEAKER

General Joseph L. Votel, U.S.A. (Ret.)

General Joseph L. Votel is a retired U.S. Army Four-Star officer, who served as the Commander of the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) from March 2016 to March 2019. He was responsible for U.S. and coalition military operations in the Middle East, Levant and Central and South Asia. His distinguished 39-year military career included combat in Panama, Afghanistan, and Iraq.



SILENT / LIVE AUCTION

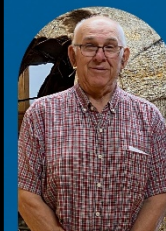
Proceeds to benefit the Polk County Museum.

TICKETS - \$75.00

Available on our website www.PolkCountyMuseum.org

For more information: Email: info@polkcountymuseum.org Call: (715) 485-9269

The Polk County Historical Society and Museum
 presents . . .
 Special Interactive Event



STEVE SYLVESTER

What Am I?



It is a guessing game, presented by local collector, Steve Sylvester. This is an interactive event where Steve will be displaying unusual farm tools and asking guests "What am I?"

Thursday, September 23
 7:00 pm

Limited Reservations
 \$10 per person
 Refreshments provided

Register today by calling 715-485-9269 or online at polkcountymuseum.org/new-events

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 9TH
 4:00PM - 5:30PM

Annual Membership Meeting

LEDGER ROOM
 POLK COUNTY MUSEUM

ANNUAL REPORT, ELECTIONS, REFRESHMENTS,
 MEMBERS-ONLY TOUR WITH EXHIBIT SPEAKERS

RSVP:
[WWW.POLKCOUNTYMUSEUM.ORG/
 ANNUALMEETING](http://WWW.POLKCOUNTYMUSEUM.ORG/ANNUALMEETING)



Donation Highlight

Do you remember the "Tin Man", a 14-foot statue on Hwy 8 in St. Croix Falls? In 1967, Harold Bishop started the Tin Man, Inc., a sheet metal contracting business, with partner and friend Dave Carlson. The Tin Man statue was first installed on the roof of the business and was later moved to the ground when the business was sold in 1978. This summer the museum received a visit from Mike Carlson, son of Dave Carlson. Mike owns a Sheet Metal Company in Arizona. His employees created a replica of the "Tin Man" and donated it to the Polk County Museum in June. We are happy to have this Polk County iconic statue in our collection!

