

# WOOD COUNTY



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## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

### *Hello Fellow Genealogists!*

A few months ago I had a small stroke and this made me more aware of how short life is, how unexpected things can happen, and all of the stuff I have in my house.

I have thought through the years of who should have this or that, but now I should get certain things together, sort, and give things away. Take time to write down the stories of the family treasures that you have—whose was it, who gave it to you, and to whom you want to leave it so that special piece isn't forgotten.

Don't forget all the debris that a person collects that has no meaning or purpose. Don't leave all of that for your family to go through. I hate to leave my kids with everything. I had to be responsible for my mother and an aunt when they died, and it is no fun. There is so much that is meaningful to the family and more that is just regular things, like furniture and clothes that can be sold or given away.

That being said, now be practical. Get your family research together, file and organize, put in boxes or a file cabinet. Sort your pictures and put names on them. Don't wait for that scrapbooking party! Make sure there is someone to carry on.

Back up your computer

files and rent a small safe deposit box for all the old original pictures and negatives, and the small mementos from your mother. If you have original copies of birth, baptism, marriage and death certificates, it's time to put them in a safe place.

Every time I hear on the news of a natural disaster, I think of all the things in my house that could be lost and gone forever.

Remember, we are the "Keepers Of The Flame." Other family members turn to us for answers on the history of our ancestors. Let's leave a legacy behind that can be understood and appreciated by all.

*Happy Hunting!*

*Diantha Neinfeldt*

*There is a fine line  
between a packrat and a  
serious family historian!*

## NEW OFFICERS

Officers were voted in at the end of last year to take us on into the new year. Please help the officers out in any way that you can. Our society is only as strong as its members.

Chairman:  
Diantha Neinfeldt

Vice Chairman:  
Tina Krummel

Secretary:  
Doreen Dimick

Treasurer:  
Bev Polansky

Trustee:  
Karen McCarthy

## Dues!

It's that time of year again—your annual dues are payable now. Our membership year runs from August 1 through July 31.

Check your newsletter label. The line above your name has the expiration date of your membership. There is a membership form on page 1206 of this newsletter. Please check with Bev, our treasurer, on the status of your membership.

## WHO'S WHO IN WISCONSIN RAPIDS: EDWARD THEODORE BODETTE

The subject of this sketch, Edward Theodore Bodette, was born in Three Rivers, Canada, November 9, 1846, and moved to Rochester, New York, with his parents at the age of six months, where the family lived until young Edward was ten years old. His father then decided to go West and started with his family for Grand Rapids, Wisconsin, but they got no farther than Fond du Lac, as they were unable to find the way to their destination. Mr. Bodette, secured a place with a private family for his wife, three sons, Elijah, Veloris, and Edward and two daughters, Agnes and Mary, and started out on horseback to find the way here. It took him just one week to make the trip, and on his return here, he again started out with his family bound for the desired haven. Mr. Bodette said, "We took the boat at Fond du Lac and went from there to Oshkosh and up the Wolf River to Gills Landing. From there we took the stage to Plover, where we again changed conveyances and finally landed here." He says there was one sight he will never forget. When they were crossing from Fond du Lac to Oshkosh, they saw a boat coming down the river, loaded with wood, with five or six teams of horses propelling it. He states that the sight was so unusual and queer to him that it still remains fresh in his memory.

### *Didn't Like the West*

The West did not appeal as strongly to Mr. Bodette's father as he had thought it would, and when early in the fall a team from Portage, delivering goods came to

Grand Rapids, Mr. Bodette thought it a fine chance to start back East. So he packed up all his wordly goods, and with his family returned with the teamster to Portage from where they continued their journey until finally they reached Rochester again.

Edward remained there until the spring of 1869, when he too fell prey to the lure of the West, and, securing a map of Wisconsin, studied it to find the most attractive place to locate, and finally decided that it would be Neillsville. He decided to go directly there. Mr. Bodette, in telling of his trip says, "I came as far as Black River Falls where, owing to the heavy snow, I found I would be obliged to wait at least three days before I could continue on my way to Neillsville, so I decided to go to New Lisbon. I stayed there for a week. While there, I was told that Wonewoc would be a fine location. I went there via the C.M.&St.P. Railway to Mauston and continued my journey to Wonewoc from there by stage. I found the place so dreary and desolate looking that I did not want to remain. I paid a man five dollars to take me back to Mauston the same night, from where I went back to New Lisbon again. I then decided to come back to Grand Rapids to see what

*(Cont'd on Page 1203)*

*(Cont'd from page 1202)* might be in store for me there. Being a shoemaker by trade, I was naturally interested in the

## WHO'S WHO, EDWARD BODETTE, CONT'D.

shoe shops and went about to see how many were located in the village. I found the first one to be owned by Charles Belknap, which was located where Huntington's Garage is now built. I next visited William Balderston's little frame shop in the block where the amusement hall now stands. I then went farther down the street and found James D. LaBreche in a shop located where Weisel's Store now is.

### **Entered Business**

Mr. LaBreche and I formed a co-partnership and we ran the business together for three years and a half, when I bought his interest, and have continued working at my trade ever since.

I lived at the Rablin Hotel, located where the Library now stands, and which was considered at this time to be one of the best hotels in the state outside of Milwaukee. The hotel was destroyed by fire in 1880, just two days previous to the big flood.

The Reporter was the only newspaper here at that time. It was edited by James Ingraham, who had his office and printing room in the upper story of a building, which was located where the Gordon building now stands, and which was owned by C. W. White, who had a hardware store on the lower floor. W. S. Miller owned a general store where the Empire Saloon stands, a part of which is the original building. Next to that was a row of buildings owned by John and Antoine Arpin. The only one remaining now is occu-

piated by the Weeks Marble Works. Peter Veterfuelle had a grocery store in the Huntington building near the Witter Hotel. It was later enlarged and remodeled and still stands on the same ground. The little old Spafford frame building just south of the New Armory stood on the opposite side of the street where the new Engine House No. 1 is located. A block of frame buildings, called the Red Block because the buildings were all painted red, owned by George Neeves extended from where the Mason Saloon now is to Reiland's Butcher Shop.

### **Recalls Old Stores**

The next block was occupied by the Wisconsin Hotel, built by Henry Clinton. Next to that on the east side of it was Joseph Homer's general store, while next to that was H. B. Philleo's Drug Store, on the ground floor while the rooms on the second floor were used as a photographic gallery by Mr. Hall. J. D. Witter had an Exchange Bank in a small building where Beardsley's Grocery now stands. A building where the old Fournier Barber shop stands, next to Daly's Drug Store was occupied by Steve Snyder for a Meat Market on the lower floor, while the second floor was occupied by a dress-making shop conducted by Miss M. G. Gordon.

Charles Frisby owned a building where F. S. Gill's Paint Store now is which he used and occupied as a Furniture and Undertaking shop. Abner Atwood occupied a building just to the East as a Barber Shop and just beyond was a Wagon Shop run by Lucian Berard, Sr., I. L. Mosher occupied the building in which Brandt now has his Meat Market, where he conducted a general store. The small building next to Loock's Grocery Store now used as a Barber Shop was occupied by Horace Sweeney for a Tailor Shop and who also had a Livery Stable in the rear of the building. Just north of this was Henry Belanger's saloon, while in the building now occupied by the Penny Company was the Worthington Bank on the ground floor, and the Music Hall, above.

### **Married In This City**

In October, 1872, Edward Theodore Bodette was united in marriage to Bertha Zeaman of this city. Nine children were born to them, six of whom are still living, four sons, Joseph, Frank, William, and Edward, Jr.,

*(Cont'd on Page 1204)*

*(Cont'd. from Page 1203)*

and two daughters, Mabel and Laura, all of whom are married and living here, with the exception of Laura, the only unmarried one, who lives in Hammond, Indiana, where she is employed by a publishing house.

## WHO'S WHO, CONT'D.

Mr. Bodette is of the Catholic faith. He is not a member of any secret order or organization. He says he has always voted for the man he thought best fit to fill the office, irrespective of politics.

Mr. Bodette said that, although he had not accumulated wealth, he had lived here in peace and contentment, and hoped to end his days in Wisconsin Rapids, where he is now the oldest business man in the city.

*Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune  
Saturday, January 29, 1921*

Wood County Roots Editor Notes:

*Mr. Edward Bodette passed away Sunday, July 26, 1931, after developing pneumonia following eye surgery. He was the son of Nelson and Armina Bodette. His obituary, printed in the Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune on Monday, July 27, 1931, states that he married Bertha Zeaman on November 20, 1872. She was the daughter of Louis and Mary Zeaman of the Town of Sigel. The obituary also noted that he helped organize the volunteer fire department on the east side of Grand Rapids and was associated with it for many years.*

*I just love these articles on Who's Who in Wisconsin Rapids. Besides giving lots of good genealogical information, a lot of the biographies go on to describe the early towns of Grand Rapids and Centralia. It is so neat to read all the descriptions of the buildings, the places of business, and the business men and women. I will be choosing more of them to reprint here within the pages of our newsletter. Let me know if there's one in particular you'd like to see printed.*

*After seeing some of these published in our newsletter, McMillan Library added the list of them and an easy link on their website. Check it out.*

## FORTY-NINE JOHNSONS ARE LISTED IN THE NEW DIRECTORY

The name of Johnson, one of the names listed most frequently on army rosters during the war, appears most frequently in the new Wisconsin Rapids directory that was recently published by the Sterling Directory Service Company. Forty-Nine Johnsons are listed while Smith, generally considered to be another common name, appears 29 times. War records show that the name of Jones was the third ranking name, but in this city only 4 are listed.

Edmund Schaffenberger, Nekoosa, is the owner of the longest name listed and H. Gee, Wisconsin Rapids, has the shortest name. Joseph Freudenberger is the longest name listed from this city. According to the directory there are found in this community: ten Browns, ten Whites, three Greens, but the Blacks are missing. Fleas, Gumm, Hamm, Hatch, Fry, and Daisy Dill are a few of the odd names listed.

The directory is a model in every respect, containing a classified business directory, a rural route directory, arranged both alphabetically and according to routes; a street guide, making it easy for the reader to locate the streets; a city directory, containing the names, addresses, telephone numbers, giving the occupation of the occupants and whether the house is owned or rented. The letters O. R. and B. placed after the names, show whether the residence is owned, rented, or is occupied as a boarding place by the person living there.

The section headed miscellaneous information contains the names of the members of the city government, city council, fire department, police department, justices of the peace, board of health, board of public works, finance committee, and the water works committee.

*The Daily Tribune  
Saturday, August 20, 1921*

## BOOKS PURCHASED FOR McMILLAN LIBRARY

The following books were purchased by our Society last year for placement at McMillan Memorial Library:

- Planters of the Commonwealth by Charles Edward Banks (2014)
- A Beginner's Guide to Online Genealogy: Learn How to Trace Your Family History and Discover Your Roots by Michael Dunn (2015)
- Genealogy Online for Dummies by April Leigh Helm (Revised 2014)
- From Where They Came To Where We Are, History of the Town of Grant, Portage County, Wisconsin, by Dorothy Raasch and Others (2014) (Donated by Dorothy Raasch)
- 3 Volume Set: Norwegians in America, Their History and Records by Ulvestad. (This is a translated version of the 1907 and 1913 editions.)

Volume 1: (1825-1907) Sorted by geography in the USA and Canada and by first name (2010).

Volume 2: (1825-1907) Sorted by occupation and 1,700 locations in Norway. Also in-

cludes Norwegians in the American Wars including the Civil War (2011).

Volume 3: (1825-1913) Sorted by last name or paternal names. References Volumes 1 and 2. Also includes thousands of biographical sketches (for genealogy) (2012).

- ◆ Volume 1 is placed in memory of Neoma Maleski, a charter member.
- ◆ Volume 2 is placed in memory of John "Jack" Lukes, Jr.
- ◆ Volume 3 is placed in memory of Barbara Johnson.

Thanks to member Flores Gumz who heads up our Book Purchases Committee. She has been doing this for years and always does an excellent job. Thanks, Flores, for your hard work and dedication!

### NEW MEMBERS

Back in March, Donna Ryterske joined our group. Yours truly missed her joining then but is making up for it now. She lives in Lily Lake, Illinois. Her e-mail address is kal-loran@att.net. She is researching her great grandfather Joseph Walloch, 1868-1940. He married Rosalia Jankowska on June 23, 1890. He is buried at Holy Rosary Cemetery in Sigel. Keep watch in a future newsletter for an article by Donna about her ancestors in Wood County.

We also welcome back Dennis Krause who has rejoined our ranks. Dennis was a member back in 1994. He had served as a Trustee during his previous membership. Dennis also did the survey of the photographic studios in this area. An article was published in the July 2005 newsletter about this survey. His e-mail is djkrause@wctc.net. Dennis lives in Nekoosa.

Let's give a "Heart" welcome to both of these new members!

### ANNUAL REPORTS

Trustees: The trustees turned in the most recent copy of the Cabinet inventories. This copy is kept by the secretary and available at all of our meetings. They are still looking for some annual reports prior to 1998, 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2007-2008; the Policy & Procedures Manual; and the Historian's records.

Research: The Research Committee was taken over from Diantha Neinfeldt by Mary Moss. She reports she answered nine research requests. Since we have so many records on the web site, research requests have dropped off over the years.

Web Site: Some links on our web site had changed and these were updated, along with some of the wording. A quote was obtained for putting the newspaper index on our site, if it is decided that we should do that.

## DREAM HELPED FATHER TO FIND BOY

Nekoosa Tribune— Following directions received in a dream he had during the night and repeated again in the morning as though given by the little fellow himself, finally rewarded the persistent and faithful search for the body of Don Gavre who was drowned two weeks ago yesterday.

S. Gavre, father of the lad, had planned on starting out Tuesday morning with a week's supply of food and a camping outfit and had all in readiness Monday evening for an early start Tuesday morning. He retired early and during the night dreamed that he was hunting for the boy and from an unknown source he received directions as to the exact location of the boy. It all

seemed so real that he awoke. In the morning, he said, it seemed as that his boy was calling him, telling where he was and to look very carefully. It all seemed so uncanny but Mr. Gavre started out and when he had reached a sandbar in the river opposite the Bulgrin farm, New Rome, he found the location he dreamed of. An examination of a little cove, which was given as the place where the boy was, brought to an end a two-week's suspense.

The body was found almost buried in the sandbar, only the face showing in the water. The sand had even worked through the clothes of the lad. Mr. Gavre telephoned to his wife that he had been successful and Louis Simmet

went down in his auto and brought both Mr. Gavre and the lad back. Funeral services were held Wednesday morning, at the Sacred Heart Church, Rev. Fr. Feldman officiating and interment made at Riverside Cemetery.

*Donald J. Gavre  
Born March 28, 1916  
Died May 7, 1919*

*Article from the front page of  
The Grand Rapids Tribune,  
May 29, 1919.*

### MEMBERSHIP FORM

**DETACH AND MAIL WITH A CHECK FOR \$15 PAYABLE TO:  
HEART O' WISCONSIN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 1565  
WISCONSIN RAPIDS WI 54495-1565**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**New members only:** You may have **one** free surname search if you reside outside of Wood County, WI (a \$10 value).

Surname you would like researched: \_\_\_\_\_

The membership list is published once per year in the December newsletter. We ask that you give permission for us to publish your address, telephone number, and e-mail address by responding to the following questions. **(Please clearly circle your answer; if no response is given, we will automatically publish):** I wish to have the following published in the December newsletter: my address? **Yes No**; my phone number? **Yes No**; my e-mail address? **Yes No**

Members may submit one free query per year, which will be published in the Society's newsletter in order to contact others researching the same ancestors. It should be 50 words or less, not counting the name and address of the submitter. Members and non-members may submit additional queries at the rate of 10 cents per word.

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want a membership card mailed to you. Thanks.

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**8 Sep 2015**      **Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society Meeting, 6:30 p.m., McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, WI.** "What Did You Do Last Summer?" is the title of our program. More details to follow. Check our website at [www.howgs.org](http://www.howgs.org).

**17-19 Sep 2015**      **FGS 2015 Regional Conference, Syracuse, New York.** Held in partnership with the New York State Family History Conference, the event kicks off with a Focus on Societies Day—a full day packed with sessions for society leaders, members, and those wanting to become more involved in societies. Go to [www.fgs.org](http://www.fgs.org) for more details and registration.

**13 Oct 2015**      **Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society Meeting, 6:30 p.m., McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, WI.** Ruth Steffen from the USWP Archives in Stevens Point will be joining us to update us on what's new in the archives.

**17 Oct 2015**      **Fall Seminar 2015, Wisconsin State Genealogical Society.** This event will be held at the Hotel Marshfield in Marshfield, WI. The main event will be Saturday. Details will be announced as they become available, or go to [www.wsgs.org](http://www.wsgs.org).

**10 Nov 2015**      **Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society Meeting, 6:30 p.m., McMillan Memorial Library, Wisconsin Rapids, WI.** Local author, Ed Arendt, will discuss his research for the three books he wrote on old schoolhouses in Central Wisconsin—Wittenberg, Arbutus, and Plank Hill schools, all in the Town of Port Edwards.

**02 Dec 2015**      **Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society Meeting, The Alexander House, Port Edwards, WI.** This will be our annual Christmas gathering. Please note the date change. More details to follow.

**8-9 Apr 2016**      **Wisconsin State Genealogical Society Gene-A-Rama.** This will be held at The Plaza Hotel & Suites, in Wausau, Wisconsin. More information coming soon. Stay tuned to [www.wsgs.org](http://www.wsgs.org).

**31 Aug-3 Sep 2016**      **FGS 2016 National Conference in Springfield, Illinois.** Celebrate FGS' 40th Anniversary as they return to the Land of Lincoln. Go to [www.fgs.org](http://www.fgs.org) for more information as it becomes available. Plan now to attend this nearby conference.

*If you're a member of WSGS, don't forget their very informative webinars which you, as a member, can access on their website at [www.wsgs.org](http://www.wsgs.org).*

## Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society

**HEART O' WISCONSIN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

Chairman	Di Neinfeldt
Vice Chairman	Tina Krummel
Secretary	Doreen Dimick
Treasurer	Bev Polansky
Trustees	Karen McCarthy
3 years	Eugene Meier
2 years	Ben Chitek
1 year	

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

Book Purchases	Flores Gumz
By-Laws	
Genealogy Class	(Vacant)
Historian	
Hospitality	Joyce Keehn
Indexing	Mary Peters
Library Files	Arlene Keehn
New Members	
Newsletter	Bev Peaslee
Pedigree Charts	Myra Sweet
Research	
Sunshine	Sue Miller
Website	Di Neinfeldt

Wood County Roots Editor:  
Bev Peaslee

**PURPOSE OF SOCIETY:** To assist members and others in genealogical research and to preserve local records.

**DUES:** \$15 per household—one newsletter per address. Please list names of all persons joining. Due at or before 31 July. Membership year runs from 01 August through 31 July.

**MEETINGS:** Held monthly—September through June—on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the McMillan Memorial Library, 490 East Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, WI (right across the street from the Hotel Mead & Convention Center).

**Wood County Roots Editor:**

Bev Peaslee Phone: 715-652-2513 E-mail: [elvistcb@tds.net](mailto:elvistcb@tds.net)