



Bayview History Bulletin

Summer 2025

Committee Members: Paul Johnson, Ella Cross, Linda Jorgensen, Mike Bunch, Mary Gruhl, Jenny Murphy, Michael Payton. Contributions by Susan Raasch

A Garage that was the Bayview Beach Change House

by Paul Johnson



Those of you who used to go to Bayview Beach in the 1960s and 70s, do you remember what that changing room looked like? If this garage looks familiar, the garage door you see replaced the wall and door, and a window replaced the door on the other end. The building now looks like it is in good shape, so the \$100 paid for it, when in 1980 the Bayview Town Board offered it on bid, means some upgrading was done and it now looks nice.

Unfortunately, the building as a beach house was short lived because beachgoers started to rip off the siding to use in their bonfires. It was right next to the beach along the beach road.

During the era of its use, a whistle could be heard as the engineer made the blast for driveways and roads, even heard from across the water past the Onion River as the train made its way from Bayfield. We miss those sounds, but the Bayview History Committee reminds us of the enjoyment here at Bayview Beach for many then and now.

The Railroad Made Large-Scale Brownstone Quarrying Possible

By Paul Johnson

The quarrying and milling of brownstone in the late 1800s had a significant impact on the architecture of Bayfield, Washburn, and Ashland. What would our cities be without our brownstone buildings, foundations, and facades? What other group of smaller towns in America have such a display of beautiful reddish brownstone? Thanks to this industry in what became the Town of Bayview, people around the country are familiar with brownstones, the buildings with materials from right here.

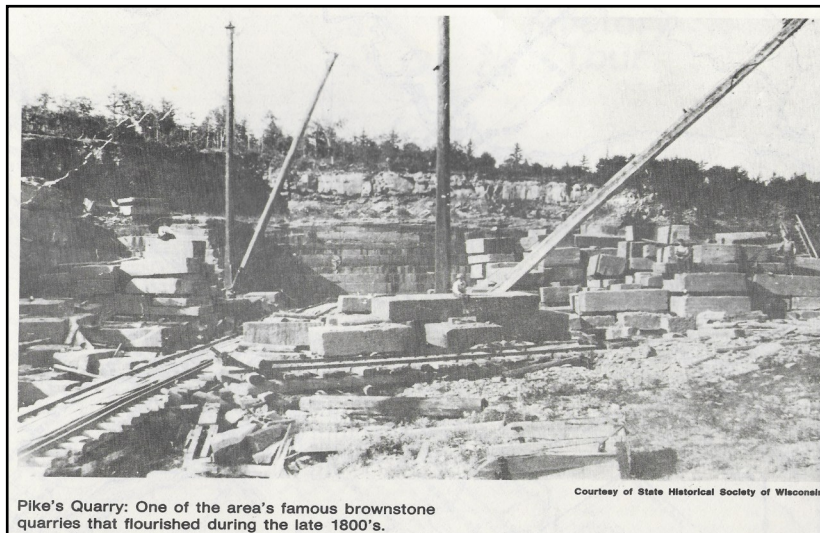
How did railroads and ships make a difference? In 1889 and 1890, over a million cubic feet were shipped from the Prentice Quarry. When it took 4 switching moves to replace full flat carloads and leave empty cars, and this done at 4 major quarry sites, you can only imagine how much work the fireman, engineer and brakemen did to get the stone moved. Switching moves made possible the countless number of reloading flat cars in and above the quarries. The local buildings needed the sawmill down Frostman Road to cut stone to the block sizes needed. A 14 x 2-foot model railroad displayed at the Washburn Homecoming showed 9 railroad switches—8 for brownstone and one at Sioux Spur for Harold Maki and others to load pulpwood. With spurs, a siding, and switchbacks, the railroads fulfilled their mission to make brownstone useful. Railroads and ships carried this stone to many cities back then, after the great fires and before steel and concrete took the market. The Bayview History Committee is working on one more display to be placed near the

Brownstone Quarries.

The brownstone quarries of Lake Superior furnish the very best kind of brown sandstone for building purposes. At Houghton three miles from this city, three of these quarries are located, being the property of W. H. Smith, Prentice Brownstone quarries, and the Hartley Brothers quarries. The finest quality of brownstone is secured from these quarries, and it is greatly sought after in the building trades.

7/23/1903 Washburn Times

Historic Depot. A switch stand and switch with storyboards, south of the paymaster office, will tell this story.



Pike's Quarry: One of the area's famous brownstone quarries that flourished during the late 1800's.

Courtesy of State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Note the swing-boom derricks that lifted the blocks of brownstone.



Tree Cookies: Telling Bayview's Story One Ring at a Time

by Mary Gruhl

Did you know trees can tell tales if you know how to listen? Right here in Bayview, a piece of living history is doing just that — and it's called a **Tree Cookie**!



Back in 2021, a towering white pine near the Houghton Depot had to be cut down because it was leaning dangerously close to the historic building. Before it was hauled away, curiosity got the better of us. How old was this giant? We started counting its rings — and

counted... and counted... until we hit **118 rings**! That means this tree first sprouted from a pinecone way back in **1903**.

We documented the rings and uncovered a story hidden in wood and time. Today, a slice of that tree — our **Tree Cookie** — sits proudly just south of the Houghton Depot, along with a display that pairs national events with our own Bayview milestones. Look to the left for big moments in American history, and to the right for the local stories that shaped our community.

How Tree Rings Work:

Each ring equals one year of life. Count from the center out and you'll find your tree's age. Wide spaces between rings? A good year with lots of water. Dark smudges? Maybe a tough year, a drought, or a run-in with insects. Our pine saw it all: **21 presidents, 5 wars**, and even the **first footsteps on the moon**!

But that's just the beginning. This tree also felt the rush of the Omaha train thunder past — four times a day! It stood strong as Highway 13 opened, ushering in the first buzzing automobiles. It carried the workers heading to the Dupont plant, watched over the first Bayfield Apple Festival in 1962, and even weathered the heartbreak of the **Edmund Fitzgerald's sinking**.

Today, that slice of tree — our Tree Cookie — carries the spirit of all those memories. Want a fun challenge? Stop by the Depot and find the ring that matches the year you were born. It's a humbling reminder of just how much history one tree (and one town) can hold.

Come visit the Tree Cookie — and find your place in its story!



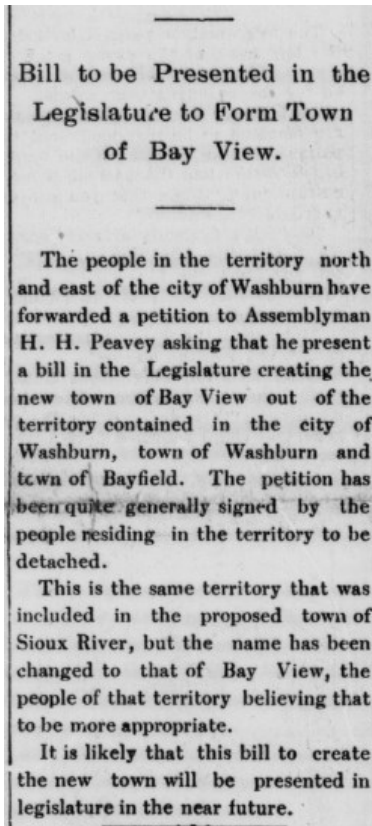
Honoring our Town Of Bayview Forebears

By Linda Jorgenson

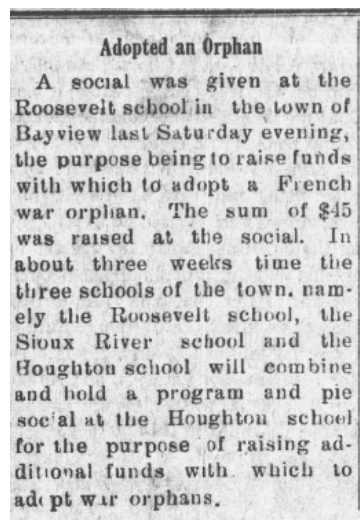
For thousands of years before Europeans came to North America people traveled on historic trails through Bayview Township and established settlements. So, we live and walk and drive on the footpaths of the "first ones". But we have no written records, only fragments of oral histories.

After the Treaty of 1854 restricted the indigenous inhabitants to the Red Cliff and Bad River reservations, lumber companies bought and clear-cut land in the town of Bayview and Frederick Prentice bought 600 acres of Bayview shoreline and quarried brownstone from 1888 to the early 1900s. People of European heritage began acquiring homesteads and buying up land for farming. The Village of Houghton was founded as the company town for the brownstone quarry workers.

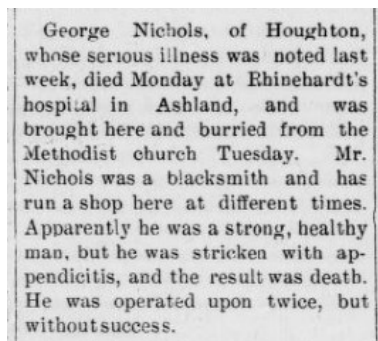
The Bayview History Committee has begun the process of collecting the stories of those early residents. Where families have photos of their forebears we hope to display them on the walls of our Town Hall. If your family would like to be interviewed and have a picture displayed in our Town Hall, please contact us at bayviewhistcom@hotmail.com.



2/6/1913 Washburn Times



SBHC 2025-02-08 at 17-58-56 The Washburn times. volume (Washburn Wis.) 1896-1976 February 13 1919 Chronicling America high contrast



George Nichols The Washburn times. volume (Washburn Wis.) April 04 1900 Chronicling America « Library of Congress - Copy (1)

Compiled from newspaper articles from the Washburn Times and the Scrapbook of the Sunshine Club held at Washburn Area Museum.

Twenty-five years ago a few women got together
To try and see if they could
Get acquainted with those out farther.
A good idea - I thought they should.

They organized a Sunshine Club,
And still there is sunshine there.
If you do not believe it, just come and rub
Shoulders with neighbors everywhere.

If a member moves, no matter where,
They are never forgotten...no, not at all.
To Idaho I went, and there
I got letters large and small.

Now I think this should do
For one who loves you, large or small.
I can't think as well as I used to,
But shall remember and love you all.

A vintage black and white photograph of a group of nine people, likely a family, posing outdoors in a field. The group includes men, women, and children of various ages. They are dressed in early 20th-century attire. The background shows bare trees and a light sky.

welcome at the meetings which were held at members' homes. In the early years to get to the meetings, members would walk, snowshoe, dogsled, ski, use horse drawn wagon or sleigh, and take the train. The train schedule was very convenient, such that the women living in Houghton would leave for Sioux River in the morning, arriving just at the right time for dinner.

1923

**SUNSHINE CLUB
HOME OF HAPPY
SUNDAY MORNING**

Charter members.

Mrs. F. C. Berlin

Mrs. Clara Berlin

Mrs. Adolf Berlin

Mrs. E. W. Berlin

Mrs. L. Page

Mrs. H. Lind

Mrs. A. Nickerson

Mrs. E. Larsson

Mrs. Helen Larson

Mrs. J. B. Clark

Mrs. J. B. Clark

Mrs. E. Berglund

Mrs. G. Berglund

Mrs. G. Berglund

Mrs. G. Berglund

Pres. Mrs. F. C. Berlin
Vice Pres. Mrs. E. Larsson
Secy. Mrs. L. Page
Treas. Mrs. H. Lind

The group from which the *Saurashis* Club
originated.

Mrs. Wolsey Nicholson
Mrs. Jennie Livingston
Mrs. Amanda Bodin
Mrs. Elizabeth Bodin
Mrs. Jeanette Wick
Mrs. Susan Livingston.



Graffiti on the Walls of Houghton Depot

By Susan Raasch

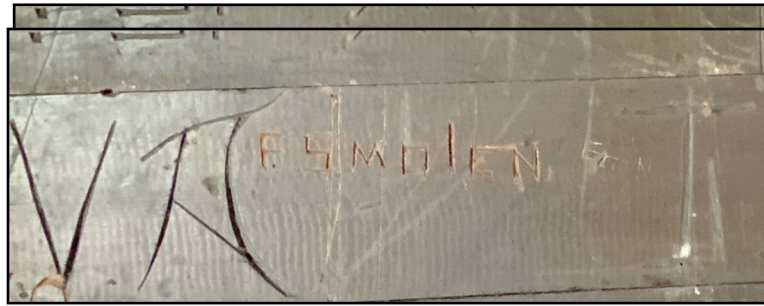
Included are four names found within the Houghton Depot. The personality of Houghton, along with Bayview and the surrounding community comes alive as these individuals are revealed in public records such as census, WWI draft cards, newspaper articles, and family histories, just to mention a few. Are any of these names familiar to you?

PARVIAINEN This name is of Finnish origin. It was carved into the wall without any first name or initial attached to it. The spelling is unique; the person that etched this surname was most likely a recent emigrant having kept the INEN ending which was often dropped or modified from Finnish names after settling in the United States.

There were a few Parviainens in the lower half of Wisconsin, but none revealing any connection to upper Wisconsin. This surname was located in five counties within the UP of Michigan including Gogebic, Ontonagon, Houghton, Baraga, and Marquette.

Three individuals (male) were found in Ironwood, Gogebic County. Two of these men were born in the 1880s; one was an iron miner and the other a rock driller. A third man was born in 1850; he was noted to be a logger.

We will never know the individual who spent time carving this surname in the Houghton Depot. We can only imagine the patience, the adventurous nature, and determination to find his way to a better life as he passed through our neighborhood.



F Smolen was a local lad known as Frank (Frances) P. Smolen. He was the son of Albert and Helen Kowalski Smolen who were born in Poland. Albert's allegiance to the Emperor of Austria was denounced in 1911 when his petition for US citizenship was completed. Albert had been in the USA eight years and Frank was just a young child.

Born in Washburn WI, Frank was the eldest of eight children. His father was a farmer in Bayview; Frank was not meant to follow in his father's footsteps. In the census of 1930, the entire family is listed. Frank is 23 years old. He is a

sailor "on the Great Lakes". During the early 1930s Frank is recorded on various crew lists. The ships were sailing the Atlantic from the United States to Mediterranean ports. He is a lean man at 5ft, 7in tall. In 1941, Frank marries Madelon M. Rusch in Cuyahoga County, Ohio. Per their marriage license, Frank remains a sailor; Madelon is a machine operator. By the 1950 census, the family has grown to include two children, Theodore and Karen. Frank is now employed on land, working as a mechanic's helper in a rayon manufacturing plant. It is in Cuyahoga County where Frank lived, passing in 1982. He was survived by his wife, two sons and a daughter. It can only be imagined the stories this man could tell of his travels beyond the Houghton Depot. Let's hope he recorded some of them for his descendants.

M. Tait 4/18/20 The act of carving this name into the depot wall lends to the speculation that it was a male who was the responsible culprit. After a lengthy survey of Tait's in the neighborhood of the Houghton Depot, there was one person who came of age well before 1935, the close of the depot. This individual grew up in Washburn; it was a female. A male named Tait with a first initial 'M' was nowhere to be found. Of course, it could have been any of the young men that traveled through the area seeking jobs within the quarries, lumber industry, railroads or at the "munitions plant". Yes, it could have been a lad that ventured through the depot, but just maybe it was Marion J. Smith Tait.

Marion grew up in Washburn City, Bayfield Co. She was born in 1899 to John and Jane Smith; both were born in Wisconsin. They were of German and British descent. John was a superintendent with the city's waterworks in 1910 when the household





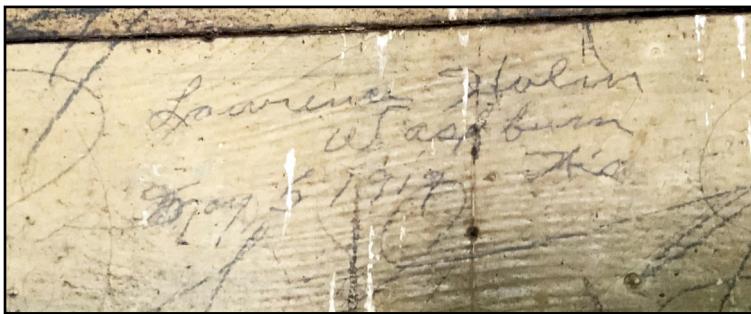
(continued from page 4) was at its fullest. Marion is listed with her siblings Florence, Elizabeth, Danforth, Jack and Warren.

In August of 1919, Marion elopes with Homer E. Tait. They marry in Ironwood, MI to the surprise of family and friends in

Washburn. The Washburn Times covered the event noting that Marion returned to town to continue her job working at the Bayfield County Bank. She was living with her parents in Washburn during the 1920 census, although the newspaper noted she moved in April of that year to be with her husband. Homer, in the same census, was a border in Turtle Lake, Barron Co., WI working as a manager in a creamery. He had been born in MN 1896. On their marriage license, Homer was residing in Comstock, WI and was employed as a butter maker. By the 1930 Federal Census Homer and Marion J. were living in Stanley, Chippewa Co., WI with sons Lawrence 8, Leonard 6, and Keith 4 years old. Homer is listed as a manager at a milk plant.

Going back to 1916, The Washburn Times covered the start-up of the White Rose Creamery. Business partners were McKinney and Maxcy. They brought in butter-maker H. E. Taite (the newspaper liked to add an 'e' on to his name). This may have provided the opportunity for these two young people to meet.

Left to the imagination, Marion may have passed through the Houghton Depot traveling between home with her parents and her husband in Turtle Lake. What better way to pass the time while waiting for an often-delayed train than to proclaim your love by carving your new married name. The newspaper did report Marion's move home to Homer occurred in April 1920 which might explain the carved date of 4/18/20.



Lawrence Holm was the son of Ole and Christina Holm. They were of Norwegian descent. Ole immigrated in 1873; Christina arrived in the US in 1882. The 1900 federal census notes Ole is a railroad laborer. His household has seven children between ages three and fifteen living in Cumberland, Barron County, WI. Lawrence, the eighth child, was born in August of that year, a few months after the census was taken.

The 1905 census reveals that Ole is a widower with nine children. His wife, Christina, passed in 1903. Ole and his eldest son are employed at a sawmill. Lawrence, the second youngest child, is four years. The following census of 1910 lists Ole as a foreman in a lumberyard.

He has remarried. His wife Ida and her two teenage sons are

included in the household. Lawrence, age nine, is one of seven full siblings besides the stepbrothers.

The first record of the Ole Holm Family living in Washburn is the 1920 Federal Census. Lawrence and one brother are the only children remaining at home. Lawrence is 19 years old and is a clerk at a drug store. His father is a section hand for the railroad. During the early 1920s Ole held the position of Washburn Chief of Police. Prior to this period he was on the Dupont police force.

When Lawrence wrote his name on the Houghton Depot wall, he included the date May 5, 1917. The significance of this date is not known, but it is possible it was just the date he

was at the depot. He would have been 16 years old. In September of 1918, Lawrence completed his WWI draft card which stated he was living in Bayfield where he was working as a tallyman for the Wachsmuth Lumber Co.

The 1930, 1940, and 1950 federal censuses place Lawrence in the City of Bayfield. He was a pharmacist with his own drug store. He had married Grace nee Arntsen; they were the parents of two daughters, Patricia and Mary.

Lawrence died in 1968 from post-surgical complications. The Washburn Times reported he had been employed as a pharmacist in Laona, WI for nine years prior to his death. He and Grace are buried in Washburn.

9/20/1917

Washburn Times

COMMUNITY FAIR
IS BEING HELD

Exhibits of Farm Produce, Stock,
Etc. is on Display

Fine Showing Being Made by Farmers
of the Town of
Bayview.

One of the first Community Fairs to be held in northern Wisconsin is being held at the Houghton School grounds in the town of Bayview this week. The fair opened yesterday morning and will close this evening. It was arranged by the Bayview Community Club and shows the enterprise of the officers and members of the Club.

The exhibits of farm produce, live stock, household articles, etc on display has opened the eyes of those who have attended and the people of the enterprising town have made a wonderful showing and one that many other towns will envy.

For a small community the people of Bayview can feel proud of their first annual fair.





Dr. Tunis Robert Spears: Surgeon for the Omaha Railroad

From an interview by Mary Gruhl with Karen Novacheck, granddaughter of Dr. Spears



Dr. Tunis Robert Spears graduated from Rush Medical School in Chicago and moved to his hometown of Washburn in 1891 at the age of 28 to become the doctor everyone knew. With bag in hand loaded with all the necessary tools, he cared for all who needed help.

Not only did he serve the people of Washburn and adjacent

towns, but he also worked as a physician for the Northern Pacific Railway for over 20 years and served as the company surgeon for the Omaha Railroad for 50 of the 59 years he lived in Washburn. His responsibility as railway surgeon was



to attend to the injuries of staff and passengers on the railways. He also provided routine medical examinations for employees and applicants.

In addition, he served as a health officer stating in 1935 those were the years when the health officer actually went to the home if a child had whopping cough or measles or chicken pox and put a sign on the door that said quarantine. For many years he was also a local examiner for New York Life Insurance and the Catholic Order of Foresters Life

Insurance. That's when you had to have a medical clearance to get life insurance.

The chair that was in his office (now the Chequamegon Book Store) still exists and is located in the home of his granddaughter, Karen Novacheck. Maybe some of you remember sitting in it.



Some of Dr. Spears medical equipment.



Thank You:

The Bayview History Committee, which is part of the Washburn Heritage Association, extends it's thank you to all who have and continue to support the development and maintenance of the historic Houghton Depot. Thanks also to the Apostle Islands Historic Preservation Conservancy and the Washburn Community Education Foundation for their support through grants. Please consider supporting the Houghton Depot by sending your contribution to Bayview History Committee, P.O. Box 837 Washburn, WI 54891. Volunteers are needed for Open House and Programs. Please let us know at bayviewhistcom@hotmail.com if you can help. Requires about 10 hours a year.

Mission Statement: The Bayview History Committee exists to collect and preserve the history of the Town of Bayview and to make it available to residents and the general public.

