

Gogebic Range Genealogical Society Newsletter

October 2015

History took center stage in the summer of 2015. From April to June, Ironwood hosted the Smithsonian Exhibit, The Way We Worked. As a corollary to the exhibit, organizations and businesses throughout the Northland showed a spirit of cooperation not normally seen on the Gogebic Range. Exhibits popped up in store windows and anywhere else there was available space. The Gogebic Range Gen. Society conducted a program at the Gogebic Community College which appealed to new researchers as well as those who were interested in working technology into their genealogy. Then came the U.P. History Conference, hosted by the Historical Society of Michigan and the Ironwood Area Historical Society. About 150 attendees, many from the Lower Peninsula, enjoyed several break-out sessions, tours, and of course several opportunities to discuss genealogy. Attendees were very complimentary of Ironwood and its history. Next year's conference will be held in Munising. .

A Call for wives

Immigrants came to our area for various reasons. I think you'll enjoy the following story. The Ironwood Daily Globe of Dec. 3, 1997 relayed a story, "Miners Advertise for Brides" which detailed a means to attract more women to the area. The story was sent by John Niemi, professor of adult education at Northern Illinois University. The announcement that follows appeared in a Finnish newspaper circa 1923. It is translated from Finnish. *"We wish to announce that we are 27 young men working as miners in an iron ore mine and living together in a boarding house for men. We have come to the conclusion that this living alone as single men must come to an end and that we each should arrange for a life's companion. So there will be no misunderstanding, we are forced to say that those who have mental problems and those who have feelings against the working class do not need to apply. We do not wish to have anything to do with counter-revolutionaries, as there are enough of them here in America. We are particularly interested in young women and widows. But letters are also*

welcomed from grass widows. The 27 men are as follows: John Marjamaki, Josh Korpi, Tom Anderson, Matt Huovinen, Emil Nevala, Fred Raisanen, Axel Wuola, Paul Granlundogic', Ernest Sjoman, Jacob Niemi, Matti Luoma, John Olkkonen, William Tormala, Otto Blank, Hugo Johnson, Waino Pesonen, John Matson, Salmon Palomaki, Simon Hyppanen, John Kangas, Wilho Tuomala, Eljas Maki, Matti Ruskola, Edward Matson, Hermon Ronka, Albin Suteri and Nikolas Leeki. You may write to any of these men. They may be reached at the following address: (Name of man), Box 394, Ramsay, Michigan, United States of America."

A Michigan Search Help

The website, "Seeking Michigan," has nearly one million death records created between 1897 and 1920. You might consider using the site to fill in gaps in your family history. There are several reasons to become familiar with the site. Effective 1898, the following information was on death certificates: Date of death, first and last name, address at time of death, whether married, single or divorced, place of death, cause of death, where born, occupation, parents' names, and proposed burial location. There is no fee.

Gogebic's Grand Lady

Evelyn Bedore's life spanned nearly all of the 20th Century and part of the 21st, being born September 29, 1900 in Nash (Bayfield County), Wisconsin and dying at the age of 107 on January 29, 2008. She was a true pioneer of the North Woods, bold and ground-breaking in so many ways. In 1918, during WWI, she drove a gravel truck for the Ashland County Highway Department. That same year she married Clifford Bedore. The couple moved to Ironwood in 1923, initially residing in Jessieville Location. Evelyn served the community in many ways. She

was an active member of the Church of the Transfiguration, The Ironwood Woman's Club, and the Telephone Pioneers of America. She was on the advisory board to establish Ironwood Junior College, now Gogebic Community College. In the 1930s she helped initiate a nutrition program for Newport school children. Before the senior citizen nutrition program, she served many special meals to residents of Pioneer Park.

Preparation of food became her calling. In the Ironwood Daily Globe of Feb. 2, 2000 she recalled how she got started on her catering business. She was asked in 1937 by the Newport Mining Company to take in five boarders. By this time she and Clifford had moved to a house on Curry Street. She recalled it was a time when mining was threatened by strikes and violence was a possibility. The mine brought in a police patrol and she was asked to board some of the miners. She figured into her costs food for ten people, five for her family and five boarders, plus ten percent for labor. Fifty years later, she terminated her catering, but not before she gained acclaim as a master of the art of cooking. She remembered catering to many mother and daughter banquets, weddings, birthdays and funerals. She recalled often having four or five funerals in a day, each with their specific menu. The standard menu in the early days was potato salad, jello, ham and turkey or sausage, buns, cakes cookies and beverages.

The Ironwood Woman's Club held a special place in her heart. She joined in 1927 at the request of Mrs. Norman Thomas and immediately became involved in many of the endeavors which were hallmarks of the club, that is, social welfare, health, and school programs. By that time the club had new digs in the Ironwood Memorial building. The quarters were given to them by the city because of the club's contribution to the

planning and construction of the Memorial Building (1922). In 1935 the club had the largest membership in the state. One of the projects she was most proud of was the Memorial Building's renovation in the mid 1980s. Among other areas rehabilitated, were the stained glass windows. She said she and Mrs. Frances Nichols led fund-raising efforts for the over one million dollar project.

Evelyn had a passion for the club's on-going effort to conduct a clothing drive for the Bay Cliff Health Camp for children. In fact, in the year 2000, she stated, that was about the only big cause the Women's Club was still active in. *(Personal note—I can attest to her passion for the organization. She was into her second century of life, but still concerned about the Ironwood Woman's Club. She called me and we talked for about thirty minutes about her sadness over the disbanding of the club.*

Ironwood and environs of the 20th Century and today would not have been the same without the contributions of Mrs. Evelyn Bedore.

Feel free to contact the Gogebic Range Gen. Soc. if you would like to contribute an article to future newsletters. Of course you are welcome to contact us at anytime if you need help in any area of your personal genealogy.

Have a pleasant winter! El Nino conditions are expected to result in less precipitation and warmer weather this winter. We'll see!

Gary L. Harrington

GRGS