

2025  
ISSUE



# Calumet County Historical Society Museum

Open Sundays June-September 1:00 to 4:00  
or by appointment

*"The museum does not charge an admission and is funded mostly from the generosity of current and past society members"*

## A New Building is Coming Soon!

We have a generous donor who has committed to funding a large amount of money to create a climate-controlled building on our grounds so that we can properly display and protect Calumet County's important documents. We wish we could give you specific details right now, but we just don't have all of them figured out at this time. With our two current buildings being almost at capacity, we are doing what we can to make this a reality as soon as possible. This new building will also **give us the opportunity to work on projects 12 months** of the year.

UNDER  
CONSTRUCTION

## Herman Pagel & His Saddle

Herman Pagel was instrumental in making the Calumet County Historical Society who we are today. Our museum sits on land that was once Pagel land, and we even named our property "The Herman Pagel Historical Site." You can learn more about Herman on our website.

Herman was a horseman. For years, you could see him with his horses in local parades. In 1964 Herman went to Mexico and brought back this special saddle and rode it proudly in even more parades.

In the 1980's Herman sold the saddle to Dennis Stebane, who gave it to his wife Judith as an anniversary present. In 2023 Dennis and his family donated the saddle back to the Calumet County Historical Society.



## Open House 2025— June 8th

Our open house is a great way to start the summer season on Sunday afternoons. It's also a great way to explore what other area historians and Historical Socie-

ties have to offer. We are so lucky to have these groups around us. Watch the website and Facebook posts for more information.



Dr. Royal Klafanda, founder of the Calumet County Historical Society, formerly called the Royal Historical Museum of Chilton, and his

wife hold an old double yoke for an oxen team, which is part of the collection.

**CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org**

## 44 Star Flag Update & New Military Uniform Display Come Together!

Our new military display is coming together, and we can't wait for you to see it this spring. We will have our military uniforms set up in a standing position in front of our 1891 era 44-star flag. It

*Thank You!*

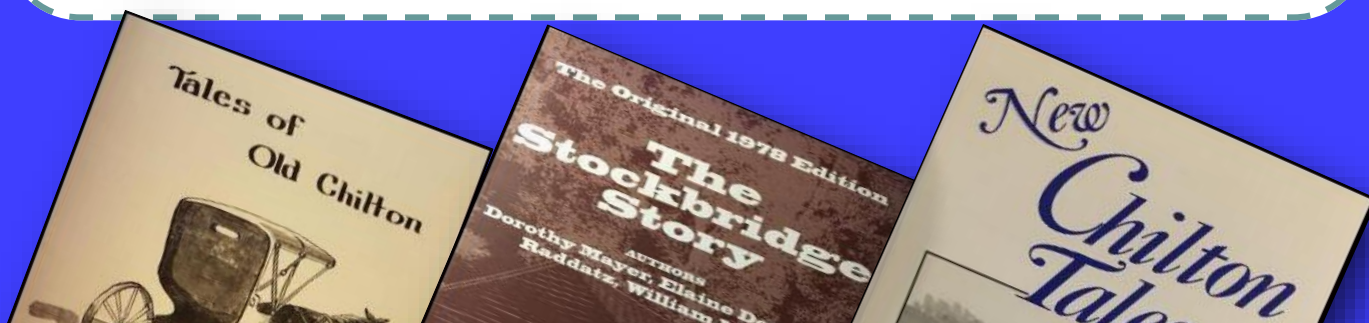
To the Allen & Karen Schuette Heritage Fund! Because of their generosity they provided funding for the following projects at our Museum.

- New Windows in the North Building
- 44 Star Flag protection project
- Digital Storage
- Funding for more displays



will be an attention getter.

The flag will have gone through a process that will seal it from future dirt and will be given a wonderful frame to support it and make it look as special as it is.



### Check out Our Online Bookstore

Books have always been an important way to learn and understand history. We are lucky to have three wonderful books available. They can be found on our website year-round and at the museum during open hours in the summer. Stockbridge and Chilton are well researched and documented in the books The Stockbridge Story and Tales of Old Chilton. Both books were written many years ago. The Stockbridge Story was written in 1978 and updated in 2008. The Tales of Old Chilton was written at about the same time and reprinted several times. We also have a limited supply of the book New Chilton Tales which was published in 2001, please contact us for availability.

Stop back often! We want to add more books from Calumet County and as we find books related to our history we will at least add the details and a link to learn more about them.



SCAN ME

# WM Bechlem Tailor

by Debbie Barany

Pictured here is a business that has pretty much disappeared from our modern society. However, at the turn of the century and up to mid-1950's, Tailoring was a prominent business in most well established communities.



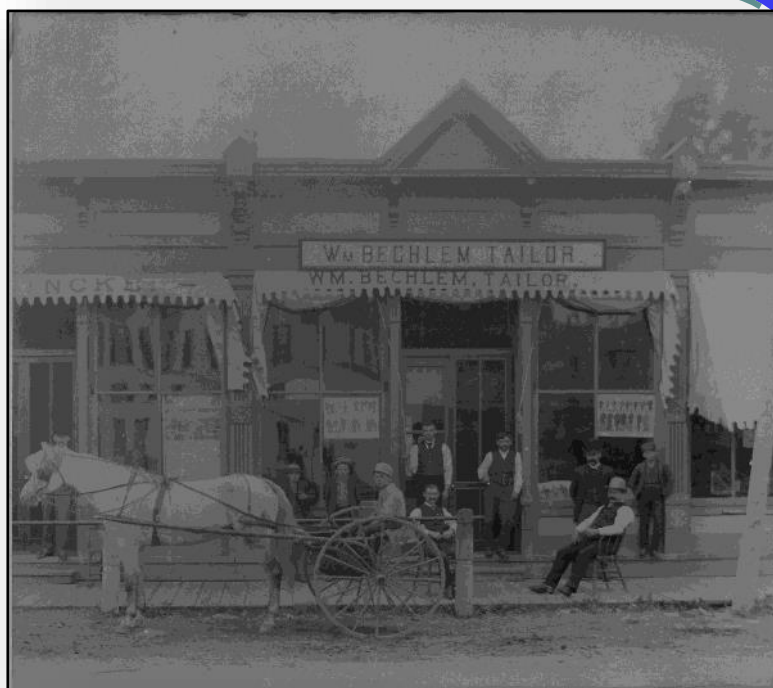
Even after ready to wear clothing appeared in the fashion world, the local Tailor would still be called upon to make alterations, and keep the local citizens furnished with the latest fashions. Just look at old newspapers and you will see them full of fashion advertisements from local Tailor shops. A time when good quality, and

long lasting clothing was a necessity of life.

William Bechlem apprenticed as a tailor in Germany. Arriving in this country in 1879, opening his own business in 1886. Building a store located at 23 N. Madison St (the building in the upper picture), which is now the Chilton Upholstery shop. Then in 1909 moved his shop to 26 W. Main St. Chilton. (lower picture) Bechlem Clothing Store became the premier clothing store in the county, selling a wide variety of clothing and custom-made outfits. William operated the store along with his sons, Otto and Edward. Bechlem Clothing finally closed its doors in 1968.

In the picture you will see Mr. William Bechlem dressed in his Odd Fellow Regalia. The Odd Fellows was a community Fraternal organization to promote social development and charitable contributions to the local community. Also pictured is lamp and a piece of advertisement from the Bechlem clothing store

(this article is available on our website)



## Calumet County in Print

An insight on life in the local area during the mid 1950s to the early 1960s for a boy from a family dairy farm in the town of Rantoul is shared in the 2023 book **"Words With My Father: – A Bipolar Journey Through Turbulent Times."**

The father is Lowell Klessig, who shared his memories about life as a pre-teen and teenager in the town of Rantoul, the nearby village of Potter, and Chilton High School, where he was the valedictorian for the 1963 graduation class.

Pages 28 to 78 are the most pertinent for Klessig's memories linked to Calumet County. Each chapter is followed by reflections by his son Lukas, who assembled the memories and put them into book form.

This book is available at the Chilton Public Library.

## Words With My Father



A Bipolar Journey  
Through Turbulent Times

Lowell Klessig - Lukas Klessig

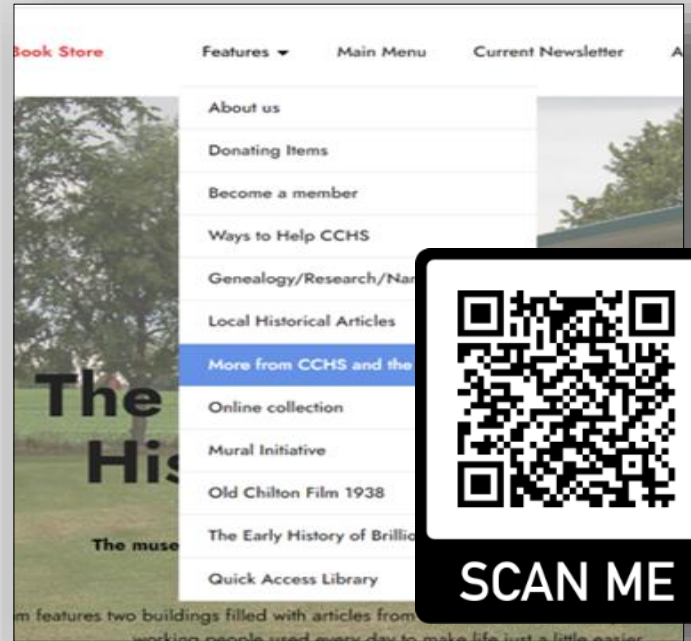
## Website Features... Always Adding More

There is a lot of county history that people have worked on over the years. If you hunt for it, you can find it in many posts and websites. We have been working to make finding local history easier by putting documents, videos, and links in one place on our website.

To see what is available, you can go to our website, click on the Features tab, then click on "More from CCHS and the Community". Whenever we find something local, we put it there. (See the picture below)

### Just some of the history available

- Calumet Memorial Hospital Opening
- Calumet County Weeklies
- Share a Storied History
- Steege Family's Street Names in Chilton
- The Tragic Service of Captain Hiram Gibbs
- Brillion Early History
- Bridges of Calumet County
- The Wacky History of Spectro-Chrome Therapy
- DEATH BY CHOCOLATE
- Chilton Schuetzenverein
- Chilton Post Office Mural
- Take Me Out to the Ball Game!
- Top Cheesemaker Awards Calumet County Fair
- Bicycle Trip Around Lake Winnebago



## Membership Drive is Underway!

The Calumet County Historical Society has three sources of financial support:

**your membership, donations and grants.**

Your membership is an important way for you to help. Membership is a financial donation to the organization, but it is also a way to get involved in meetings and the operation of the Museum. Your participation at meetings and events will help you to make a difference in our community.

**Join Right Now!**

**Go to our websites members page to pay online!**

**Memberships**

**Are good for 365 days from day of joining!**

***"The museum does not charge an admission and is funded mostly by the generosity of current and past society members. Please consider a membership Today"***

**It takes a lot to keep 2 acres of land and 2 buildings with 10,000 square feet of museum space going. Please help support us with your membership and volunteer time!**

**Open Sundays June-September 1:00 to 4:00 or by appointment  
Museum admission is free!!**

Calumet County Historical Society Museum is located one mile south of Chilton on Irish Road just off Hwy 57

**The Calumet County Historical Society**

Info @ [CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org](http://CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org) 928 Wieting Ct Chilton, WI 53014 849-4042

# Donating Pictures or Digital Images to the Calumet County Historical Society

Donate the image, the story and the history & **keep the picture**

Have you ever gone into an antique store and seen a basket filled with old photos taken of people that have no name or story connected? Sadly those photos, names, and stories are in the process of being lost and most likely it's too late.

**We are looking for photos, slides and movies that might have names, stories, or**



Chilton Hook & Ladder Company 1880



Left to Right; Hazel Asher, Marlea Sharon, Emily Sharon, Ozias Sharon, Lillian Sharon, Granddaughter Georgia

have pictures from parades, picnics, church, or school events we could use your help. You don't need to donate the photo itself.

**building names so that we can preserve the memories of people, places, and events in the county.** We are always looking to add images to our archives. If you

help us? It's easy - we just want a digital image along with any of the names and any other information you can tell us.

[Info@CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Info@CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org)

or 920-216-7461



**Open House**  
**2025!**  
**June 8th,**  
**Sunday**  
**1:00 to 4:00**

## 2025 Membership Form

This can also be done online at

[CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org](http://CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org)>Become a Member

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Business Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \* \_\_\_\_\_

Mail 2024

## Membership Levels

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$5.00 Seniors (65 & Over)            | <input type="checkbox"/> \$10.00 Individual |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25.00 Corporate                     | <input type="checkbox"/> \$15.00 Family     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$100.00 Personal Lifetime Membership |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$ _____ Donation                     |   |

☐ **YES!! Add me to your email for updates on scheduling at the museum**

**It's just from 1:00 to 4:00; it's easy and we really could use your help!**

**Mail To:** CCHS 110 Oak Street Chilton WI, 53014

**Email:** [Info@CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:Info@CalumetCountyHistoricalSociety.org)



# Calumet County Historical Society Museum

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## Have you seen these displays at the museum?

### *You Should Visit Us Soon!*

*Just a few of the  
Current Displays-*

- **44 Star Flag Update & New Military Uniform Display**
- **The Captain Hiram Gibbs Display-Civil War Hero from Forest Junction**
- **Wedding dresses and their original wedding photos**
- **Backlit stained glass windows from the First Methodist Episcopal Church that was located in Brothertown**
- **Vintage board games**
- **Barn/House model**
- **Hubcaps... we have a lot of them to see!**
- **Schoolhouse photo display**  
research by Herb Buhl
- **Clothing display**
- **Complete collection of historical State Bank of Chilton calendars with index**
- **Log cabin display**
- **Refreshed display for the log puller**

