

# THE NEWSEUM

NEWS FROM THE JAKE MENGHINI MUSEUM

## Culmination Day

A year ago Carol Sundstrom and I “volunteered” the Jake Menghini Museum to host the 2013 fall meeting of the Northland Historical Consortium group. This is a loose organization of museums and historical preservation groups from the western U.P. and northern Wisconsin who meet periodically to share and, hopefully, to gain ideas. Our Saturday, October 19 gathering at Oak Crest Golf Course achieved that.

### MICHIGAN STATE REPRESENTATIVE ED MCBROOM FEATURED SPEAKER.

We asked Ed to share state-level policies, programs, and funding opportunities that might help our small museums and then to entertain our questions.

At the onset Ed was a little doubtful that he even had ten minutes of information to share. We encouraged him to begin by telling us about himself and what exactly he does as a state representative. What a treat!

continued on page 2



## Man With a Viking Heart

Our own Ed Jasonowicz, chair of the museum board, was recognized as Norway's 2013 Citizen of the Year at the recent Leif Erikson Viking Days Festival.

Ed would be the first to acknowledge that he is amazed at all that has been achieved over the years in Norway, the schools, and

last, at the museum. On the other hand, he has kept us workers and volunteers “on task” until job after job was done.

“I’m getting old,” he warns, but in the next breath asks, “When are we going to move Jake’s cabin over to the museum?”

Keep your hand on the helm, Ed!



**SAWMILL TEAM GATHERS** The jumble of parts of the Ottoson-Brissom sawmill sat where they were dropped almost a year ago on a damp, gloomy Saturday in early December.



**SEPTEMBER 17, 2013** Armed with pry bars, shims, cement blocks, level, and tractor, the team of 4 or 5 loyal museum volunteers put the old mill in a logical layout.



**A GOOD DAY'S WORK** Next on the agenda is to erect a roof over the mill to protect it from the elements. Depending on the design, the roof could happen before snowfall. Stay tuned for further developments.



grasp of Upper Michigan's and northern Wisconsin's history. He regaled us with stories that even many of the old-timers never heard. Those stories, along with his knowledge of government and funding opportunities, set the tone for a profitable meeting of the group.

#### JAKE MENGHINI VIRTUAL HERITAGE TEAM PRESENTS.....

Over the past two years and in the summer edition of the Newseum, you have heard a lot about the ongoing videography program at Jake's. You are wondering, "Yes, we've been informed, but **WHEN** do we get to see these videos?"

With little fanfare our youthful heritage team members, Rory Sade, Natasha, and Anna Maule presented a six-minute "trailer" that combined clips from five of our WWII era interviews. As the fast-paced movie faded away to the poignant strains of Anna Maule's rendering on her violin of "Auld Lange Syne," I snuck a peak around. Many of our Consortium audience was dabbling at their eyes.

Some of the comments we heard from various people were, "Awesome! It took the young people to 'bring it home,'" "It was getting close to a Ken

## CONSORTIUM GUESTS



We allowed for plenty of "networking" time at the conference. A surprise guest was the new manager of the Ski and Snow Board Hall of Fame, Tom West.

Our guests came from as far away as Baraga and Marquette; as near as Iron Mountain, Niagara, and, here. Home-folk Bert Peterson and Dennis Lynch can be seen in background with Diane Castelaz-Chiapuzio.



Burns [one of the best film editors] presentation," and from the public TV station at NMU, "This is a professional-level presentation. When you are ready we would like to air it [a future documentary] on TV."

Following lunch and a short business session, the group of approximately 45 individuals representing about a dozen museums, visited the Jake

Menghini Museum. Most of these people were amazed at what we have accomplished with mostly volunteers.

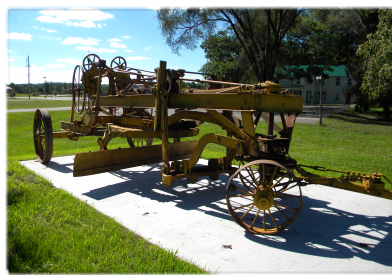
The Jake Menghini Museum stands as a visible tribute to all who helped to create it. Congratulations, volunteers, on a great culmination to our 2013 Season!

**Oak Crest Photos: Natasha Maule**

## LATEST DONATIONS: ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW



China cabinet, circa 1950, was donated by Gerald John Jossens in memory of his parents, Philip and Mamie, who were married September 14, 1914.



This road grader sat neglected for years in the City of Norway's fenced lot behind the recycle dumpsters. It couldn't find a more perfect home than beside the highway, U.S. 2, it helped build. More than one car stepped on the brakes and pulled into the museum for a closer look at the antiquated machine.



We thank Rosemary VanPeymbrock for the three beautiful planter boxes mounted on the porch railing of the museum building as well as the two smaller boxes on the kitchen porch of the farm house. Also, thank you Valeria Zanona for their gorgeous contents!



# Norway Relic of European Farm Heritage Part II: Scythe Handle Design

German

by W. A. Belding

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In the spring issue of The Newseum, volume 10, #2, I described the differences between European and American scythe blades and the way they are sharpened.

From 1972 to 1974, I was stationed by the US Army in southwestern Germany near the French border, I quickly noticed that their scythe handles, or the snathe, were very different from the American style curved scythe handle.

Their snathes have long, straight, slender main poles. These are joined by a second straight piece of wood fitted into a mortise near the midpoint of the long pole at an approximately 55 degree angle.

At the top end of both shafts is a hand grip. These joints are secured by square wooden pins in round holes, not metal screws or nails. The only metal in the scythe is the blade and a metal ring containing several set screws. The ring fits around the bottom end of the snathe and the tang of the blade to hold the blade in place.

During my travels around West Germany, I found the farmers in different geographic areas used snathe designs with subtle differences. Each style seemed specific for a given area. In some the smaller vertical piece was slightly curved or the main shaft was larger. I saw the curved American design with two hand grips attached directly to a long curved shaft only in Swabia, an area in southern Germany east of the Black Forest. It was much thicker than our style so it may have been made from spruce or some other soft wood.

One can find further information on the design and use of European scythes at <http://scytheconnection.com/adp/contents.html>. The Slovakian scythes in the video have only one horizontal hand grip. The upper hand simply grasps the upper end of the long pole.

If anyone finds a wooden tool handle similar to the illustrated design, it may be a welcome addition to the museum's early farm tool collection.



American style handle, or snathe, to the left, and the German snathe on right.



Art Belding cuts his grass the old-time way.



# A FRIEND AND THE JOKERS

from a collection of poetry by Russell H. Welch, "**DAYS I RECALL**"

*THIS COLLECTION OF POEMS WAS DEDICATED TO RUSSELL'S GRANDCHILDREN "SO THAT THEY MAY KNOW" HOW TIMES HAVE CHANGED, AND TO HELP THEM SEE HOW THEIR INGENUITY CAN ADD MUCH HAPPINESS TO THEIR LIVES.*

The collection came to us via Phyllis Hertel, Russell's daughter. Many of Russell's poems recall people and places in Norway from the early 1900s.

\* \* \*

One summer when I worked at the mine

"The Jokers" thought that it was time

To send me on my way to get

A tool for them, the name I'll never forget.

They had me going here and there

Looking for a left handed axe, everywhere.

But this I did not mind

Because every one was so kind.

A suggestion here, that I ask over there;

They all in the joke had a share.

The day was cool so I didn't mind

If I ever did make the find.

It was great fun, for me indeed

As I followed their different leads.

Until the suggestion that they dropped,

That I go to the blacksmith shop.

This I did and I was full of glee

As they watched me patiently,

As I wended my way over a rocky path

The trip that was to be my last.

The blacksmith became a friend of mine

When I asked for an axe of the kind

That they thought I would never find

In such a place as an iron mine.

Little did they know that I worked for a time

With a carpenter who was a friend of mine.

A left handed axe can be made

With a carpenter's axe by changing the blade.

In this, of course, I needed the blacksmith's aid

Of taking the handle out of the blade

And putting it in the other end of the head.

This makes a left handed axe tis said.

The bevel of the blade is taken into consideration

And if used right handed can cause consternation.

But a good joke is a joke by any measure

If one becomes a laughing stock forever.

\* \* \*

***I hope you enjoyed reading another tool and blade story. It seemed like the perfect accompaniment to Art Belding's article. I will include more of Russell Welch's poems in future issues of the Newseum.***

***if you have a story or article you would like to see in the Newseum, please email me at: [jakeslemusee@gmail.com](mailto:jakeslemusee@gmail.com) or write me at: Jake's, Box 99, Norway, MI 49870***



# November - Time To Herd The Cats

by Carol Zechlin

Director

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## AS DIRECTOR OF JAKE'S I OFTEN FEEL LIKE A CAT HERDER

Have you ever been in one of those musty, dusty, dark old mausoleums somebody palmed off as a museum? That's not Jake's. This place is full of lively people which makes it extra hard to round 'em up, sort 'em out, and say, "Thanks! I LIKE you!"

**Thanks for the multitude of kindnesses** done by you-all who've kept Jake's interesting, clean, smooth-running, growing, staffed, beautiful, informative, friendly, supported financially, and who put out the flag, watered the plants, shut the lights off and locked the door at the end of each busy day. Without every one of you, we would be doomed to mausoleum-hood.

Cat-herding is good, but it is not good to keep cats in a box. Until next cat-herding season comes around there is plenty of work to be done.

**Jake Menghini Museum is at a turning point.** Like it or not, we are in the computer era and have some major challenges ahead of us.

**Our Genealogy department** was built on the work of dedicated women who scanned, cut, and pasted a gazillion news articles and clippings into dozens of three-ring binders. These tomes have offered up information to searchers beyond the value of gold. However, we need to digitize this treasure trove and make it available to every searcher wherever they are.

**Is there anybody reading this article willing to spearhead this ambitious project?** Let us know of your interest. In the meantime, we need to plan work-bees to finish up the scanned newspapers in the file drawers. Again, let us know if you can help.

**The sawmill needs its roof.** We need monetary donations so we can complete this project.

**It's Museum Membership time.**

**The Taste of Chocolate** is coming up on Saturday, November 23 at St. Mary's fellowship hall. Although it is not as taxing as putting on a dinner, our Partners work very hard to make this major fund-raising effort a success!

This will be our fifth year and each time it only gets better. After a busy morning at the Holiday Craft Sale at Holy Spirit School, shoppers are eager to relax and enjoy our chocoholic event. As in the past, we will have our favorite feature, the basket raffle.

**Please come out-men welcome, too-and support our fund raiser.** We charge only \$5.00 for the sweet pleasure of feasting on chocolate, the nectar of angels. (You can take home extra chocolate for an additional fee.) All this comes wrapped up in that invisible, yet palpable ambiance that says, **"IT'S THE CAT-HERDING TIME OF THE YEAR AGAIN. HAPPY THANKSGIVING, EVERYBODY!"**

## 2014 - JAKE MENGhini MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP

Single Adult Yearly Members - \$7.00 \_\_\_\_ Single LIFETIME Membership - \$100.00 \_\_\_\_

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

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

Please enclose this form with your check and mail to:

**JAKE MENGhini MUSEUM, Box 99, Norway, MI 49870**

**Remember: Your new, renewed, or LIFETIME memberships help to support the daily operations of Jake's Museum. AN IDEA: GIVE YOUR RELATIVES AND YOURSELF A GIFT THAT KEEPS ON GIVING - A LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP!**



# Bringing History to Life...



\* \* \*

Two years ago our Jake Menghini Virtual Heritage Team, armed with camera and a hodge-podge of lights, boldly set forth to obtain the precious stories of our senior citizens.

Since that small, but brave start, we realized that we needed to focus on collecting the stories of our remaining WWII veterans.

After a long, arduous process, our team presented a six-minute "trailer," a collection of clips from several of the interviews, at the Northland Consortium Meeting on October 19.

Soon you can view the trailer on YouTube by going to the museum website: [www.norwaymuseum.org](http://www.norwaymuseum.org) and clicking on the video interview link.

We still have much work ahead of us before these videos are ready for release. In the meantime, we want to make sure that every WWII veteran from the Norway-Vulcan school district area has the opportunity to share their story. Please call us at 563-5586 or email: [jakeslemusee@gmail.com](mailto:jakeslemusee@gmail.com).

## NOTEWORTHY:

### TASTE OF CHOCOLATE:

- . Nov. 23, 11 a.m to 3 p.m.
- . \$5.00 Admission
- . Buy extra for gifts

### REMEMBER -

Satisfying your "sweet tooth" helps support the Jake Menghini Museum

**WRITE ON YOUR  
CALENDAR: RENEW  
YOUR MUSEUM  
MEMBERSHIP!**

## JAKE MENGhini MUSEUM

Box 99  
Norway, MI 49870