



Short Ears, Long Tales

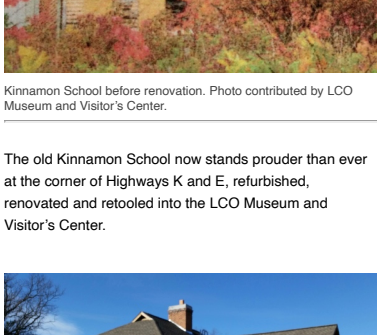
Courte Oreilles Lakes Association

Issue #18 April 1, 2017

Kinnamon School—‘We just all played together’

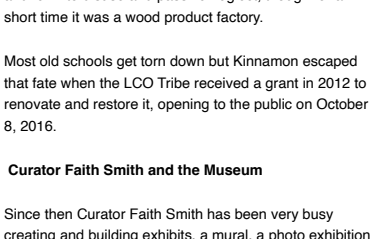
By Kathy Hanson
Contributing Writer

It has stood there for 85 years, longer than many of us live. It has weathered all the storms, seen all the decades slip by, welcomed and then said goodbye to countless children. It has been beat up but never torn down; rusted but never ruined; abandoned but never quite forgotten.



Kinnamon School before renovation. Photo contributed by LCO Museum and Visitor's Center.

The old Kinnamon School now stands prouder than ever at the corner of Highways K and E, refurbished, renovated and retooled into the LCO Museum and Visitor's Center.



Renovated and restored Kinnamon School today as the LCO Museum and Visitor's Center. Photo by Kathy Hanson.

Built in 1932 as a school for children in grades 1-8, including a Head Start program, Kinnamon closed in 1967 and fell into disuse and passive neglect, though for a short time it was a wood product factory.

Most old schools get torn down but Kinnamon escaped that fate when the LCO Tribe received a grant in 2012 to renovate and restore it, opening to the public on October 8, 2016.

Curator Faith Smith and the Museum

Since then Curator Faith Smith has been very busy creating and building exhibits, a mural, a photo exhibition and a unique gift shop—all for the April 29, 2017 special dedication to Veterans.



LCO Museum Curator Faith Smith. Photo by Kathy Hanson.

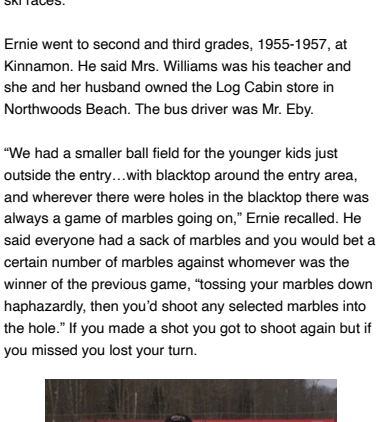
Faith spent most of 2016 visiting other indigenous museums in the Midwest, including the Milwaukee Public Museum, which has a collection of over 1,000 items from the Lac Courte Oreilles Tribe given to the museum by Curator of Anthropology Dr. Samuel Barrett who visited the LCO reservation in 1910, witnessed an eight-day dance by Native Americans from all over Wisconsin and as far away as Oklahoma, recorded field notes about the Ojibwe culture and took back everyday items such as cooking utensils, baskets and snowshoes.

Faith's ties to the old Kinnamon School include her years spent there in first, second and third grades with Mrs. Garbut as her teacher. Mrs. Garbut's husband was the janitor at the school, Faith said.

"My grandmother, Madge Smith, was the cook at the school, and whatever we were served for lunch—that's also what we had for dinner," Faith said.

The Veteran's Exhibit—formally the "Ogichidaa Warrior Exhibit"—which will be unveiled on April 29 at 11 a.m. honors veterans from all wars: WW1, WW2, Korea, Viet Nam, Iraq, Afghanistan, any veterans, Faith explained, adding that the percentage of enlisted Native men and women is very high.

"They didn't have to be drafted, they signed up," she said.



Recent photo of the Veterans's exhibit/mural. Photo by Kathy Hanson.

The veteran's exhibit/mural covers an entire wall—it is a breathtakingly beautiful red maple tree, standing at the shores of a lake with animals in and around the tree—deer, wolf, turtle, bear, eagle and more—that represent the seven major clans of the tribe. The leaves are written with the names of LCO veterans, their years and branch of service; there are 200 veteran's leaves on the tree to date but 600 have been identified and 150 more leaves are on order. The color of the leaf reflects which war the veteran served in, including purple for Purple Heart.

In that same room there are individual photos of veterans, including Lawrence Butler, an LCO member and the first person killed in Viet Nam from Sawyer County.

Faith said that beginning in June two tours are also going to be offered to visitors: one will go to Al Capone's Hideout and the other will go to the Flowage where the original village was flooded.

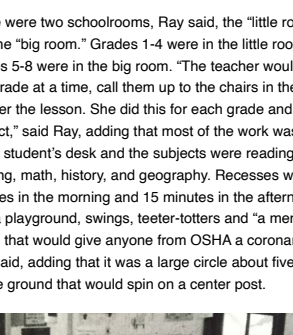
Two students at Kinnamon School

Both Ernie St. Germaine and Ray Moeller attended school at Kinnamon.

Ernie, now 69 is a retired tribal judge. He is well known as the only person to have skied all 43 American Birkebeiner ski races.

Ernie went to second and third grades, 1955-1957, at Kinnamon. He said Mrs. Williams was his teacher and she and her husband owned the Log Cabin store in Northwoods Beach. The bus driver was Mr. Eby.

"We had a smaller ball field for the younger kids just outside the entry...with blacktop around the entry area, and wherever there were holes in the blacktop there was always a game of marbles going on," Ernie recalled. He said everyone had a sack of marbles and you would bet a certain number of marbles against whomever was the winner of the previous game, "tossing your marbles down haphazardly, then you'd shoot any selected marbles into the hole." If you made a shot you got to shoot again but if you missed you lost your turn.



Ernie St. Germaine, retired tribal judge, attended Kinnamon School from 1955 to 1957. Photo submitted.

"The best younger player was Lawrence Butler—his bag of marbles was always bulging," Ernie said. Ernie also remembers playing kick baseball with a soccer ball on the smaller ball field, using three trees for first, second and third bases.

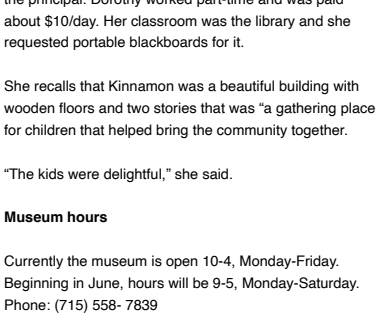
"I always dreamed of the day I might be able to hit a ball down over Highway K into the woods like a few of the older boys could do."

Ray Moeller, 83, grew up in the Northwoods Beach area, at that time known as The Boulevard. He was born in the home of a midwife—Mable Gregerson—now owned by T.J. Duffy. The Moeller homestead was just south of the Fireside, then called the Northwoods Inn. Ray said he started Kinnamon School in 1939 and went through all eight grades there.



Ray Moeller as a student at Kinnamon School (grades 1-8) beginning in 1939. Photo submitted.

"There were probably six or eight white kids in a school of about 40," Ray said, adding that race didn't play into any of their disagreements. "In those days everyone was poor. There were no rich kids in our school. The white kids didn't hang together, nor did the Indian kids. We just all played together."



Kinnamon School students. Photo contributed by LCO Museum and Visitor's Center.

There were two schoolrooms, Ray said, the "little room" and the "big room." Grades 1-4 were in the little room and grades 5-8 were in the big room. "The teacher would take one grade at a time, call them up to the chairs in the front, go over the lesson. She did this for each grade and each subject," said Ray, adding that most of the work was done at the student's desk and the subjects were reading, spelling, math, history, and geography. Recesses were 15 minutes in the morning and 15 minutes in the afternoon—with a playground, swings, teeter-totters and "a merry-go-round that would give anyone from OSHA a coronary," Ray said, adding that it was a large circle about five feet off the ground that would spin on a center post.



Students in a Kinnamon School classroom, 1952-53. Photo contributed by LCO Museum and Visitor's Center.

One kid would spin the circle and the rest would hang on and spin with their legs straight out in the air. When you couldn't hang on any longer you would just fly off into space, Ray laughed.

He remembers baseball, walking on stilts, building forts in the woods and fights. And then there was discipline. "Corporal punishment was practiced and was used quite often, but not unfairly and usually with a ruler on the back side."

A teacher remembers

Dorothy Danczyk says that her age is the "only secret I keep," but she doesn't hold back about her time spent as a teacher at Kinnamon School.

Dorothy Danczyk taught reading and math at Kinnamon School. Photo by Kathy Hanson.

She got her teaching certificate from Stevens Point in 1953, married her husband Wally in 1956 and moved to Hayward from Polonia, Wisconsin in 1959. Wally worked for the Sioux Line Railroad out of Stone Lake as a telegrapher agent. They lived in a stone home on a campground two miles south on Highway 27, which eventually became their home property where they built a house and raised five children.

Dorothy began teaching when the Entitlement Program began at Kinnamon School. She said there were about 20 children in the school at that time and she taught reading and math to six children who were having problems with those subjects.

She remembers that the reading material was sent from New York and the children had trouble with it because it was about kids living in New York City. "So I worked with my own books from the library," she said.

There were three other teachers at the time and she remembers Teresa Fleming as the main teacher, probably the principal. Dorothy worked part-time and was paid about \$10/day. Her classroom was the library and she requested portable blackboards for it.

She recalls that Kinnamon was a beautiful building with wooden floors and two stories that was "a gathering place for children that helped bring the community together.

"The kids were delightful," she said.

Museum hours

Currently the museum is open 10-4, Monday-Friday. Beginning in June, hours will be 9-5, Monday-Saturday. Phone: (715) 558- 7839

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TIME TO RENEW YOUR COLA MEMBERSHIP FOR 2017!

COLA membership is a pretty good deal. For only 25\$/year, you help COLA protect LCO, and you get a picnic in return!

[Renew your membership](#) today in one of Wisconsin's most active and respected lake associations.

Are your neighbors and extended family members of COLA? If not, please ask them to [join](#).

ANGLERS ASKED TO CULL SMALL PIKE FROM LCO

Musky decline was the topic of a [February 2, 2017 article](#) in the Sawyer County Record. At the Sawyer County Fisheries Forum on January, 25, 2017, DNR fishery manager Max Wolter proposed ideas for addressing the problem and described COLA's involvement.

Mike Persson is leading COLA's effort to re-establish Mucky habitat on LCO. According to Mike, the DNR will have nets in Musky Bay this spring to capture Muskies and harvest their eggs and sperm and also to sample the population of Pike. In recent years the Pike population has exploded to the detriment of the Muskie population. This spring the DNR will remove these pike, 3-4,000 of them. Some of the fish will be taken by the tribe for food, some will be put in the Couderay River and the bulk of them will be processed into fish patties (food). Whiskey River Meat Processing will handle the processing and the fish will be donated to area food banks. The Hayward Lakes Chapter of Muskies Inc. will donate the money for the project, which the club has done before.

SHORELAND BUFFER GRANT MONEY AVAILABLE

COLA has received a WDNR grant to develop shoreland restoration plans and designs, make bulk plant purchases, and arrange construction and installation services from area landscapers. COLA will also help provide continuing education and a hands-on buffer zone training in partnership with the Sawyer County Lakes Forum and other local groups. The primary intended audience for education efforts extends to the Upper Couderay River Watershed lakes including Whitefish, Sand, Grindstone, Windigo, Sisabagama, Osprey, Round and Little Round.

Visit the COLA website for a variety of helpful, downloadable information on Shoreland Restoration for lake associations and lakefront homeowners. For questions and details, email Kris Sivertson, COLA president, at krisw3690@gmail.com or call [715-210-0818](tel:715-210-0818).

NEW COLA WEBSITE FEATURE - LAKE OBSERVATION FORMS

The COLA website has been revised to include a much-needed feature - a place to record [lake observations](#). As we've seen over the last several years, we need to have a timely record of unusual events on LCO, and now you will have the chance to help out. There are forms available for those who want to report dying fish, invasive aquatic plant species, algae blooms, ice on/off dates, loon sightings, and other events.

COLA'S LAND USE POLICY

COLA has developed a new [land use policy](#), addressing developmental pressures on LCO.

SPREAD THE GOOD NEWS

We'd like to spread the news of COLA's good people and good works throughout the upper Couderay River watershed. If you have friends or family on nearby lakes who would enjoy Short Ears Long Tales, [let us know](#).

Help COLA by sharing this newsletter with friends.

ARCHIVED ISSUES OF SHORT EARS LONG TALES

Kathy Hanson is a free-lance reporter for the Sawyer County Gazette, the Sawyer County Field Editor for Our Wisconsin magazine, and Copy Editor for the Bayfield County Journal. She has also served as Staff Reporter, Business Feature Writer, Columnist, and Copy Editor for the Sawyer County Record.

COLA Mission: 1) to protect, preserve and enhance the quality of Lac Courte Oreilles and Little Lac Courte Oreilles, their shorelands and surrounding areas, while respecting the interests of property owners and the rights of the general public; and 2) to consider, study, survey and respond to issues deemed relevant by COLA's membership.

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