WALWORTH COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

LEGACY FOR KIDS

VOLUME 1 ISSUE 1

. Hello! Welcome to "*Legacy for Kids*" sponsored by the Walworth County

WELCOME TO "LEGACY FOR KIDS"

Historical Society (WCHS). located in Elkhorn, Wisconsin. At WCHS we are interested in collecting bits (called artifacts) of Walworth County history. Those artifacts include photographs, letters, documents and 3-D objects that tell us something about Walworth County's past.

Another job of the WCHS is to take care of those artifacts and help to keep them in a safe place for today's historians and historians of the future to look at for clues as to the county's history.

Lastly, we share the information we gather from these artifacts and other information so that a more complete story of Walworth County can be told. Those are our three goals—collecting, preserving and sharing the history of our county for you and others for now and into the future.

We hope you enjoy this and future issues of "*Legacy for Kids*" each dealing with the wonderful history of Walworth County, Wisconsin.

Got Questions?

Maybe we can help!

Look for our web site and our e-mail address on Page 8.

Let us know your questions!

HISTORY'S MYSTERIES

Do you ever wonder about the past? What was it like to live 1,000 or even 10,000 years ago? What did people then do in their daily lives? Did they work? Did they play? Did they have music or games. What did they do for fun? Were there any schools like the one you go to today? There are many mysteries about the past that have been solved and many more yet to be answered. The questions go on and on—one leading to another and another…and so on.

Historians—people who study the past look for answers to their questions and the questions of others. What questions can you think of about the past that might be interesting to learn about? Can you think of a history mystery that we need to solve?

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GEOGRAPHY OF WALWORTH COUNTY

Just For Fun

On the map above locate the following:

1. Where you live _____
2. **Elkhorn**—the County Seat or center of Walworth County Government
3. **Geneva**—the largest and deepest lake in Walworth County
4. **Fontana**—the area where the last Native Americans lived with Big Foot as their chief

A COUNTY IS MADE UP OF TOWNS

In our State of Wisconsin, each of the seventy two (72) counties is made up of towns sometimes called townships. In our Walworth County there are sixteen (16) towns. On the map to the left can you find them all? (Each town is drawn in a box of dotted lines.) The sixteen (16) towns are East Troy, Troy, La Grange, Whitewater, Richmond, Sugar Creek, La Fayette, Spring Prairie, Lyons, Geneva, Delavan, Darien, Sharon, Walworth, Linn and Bloomfield. There are eight villages in our county —East Troy, Sharon, Bloomfield, Darien, Fontana, Williams Bay, Walworth, and oddly enough Genoa City. There are four cities including Whitewater, Elkhorn, Lake Geneva and Delavan. The rest of the county is rural and some small population centers are referred to as unincorporated—that is, neither a village or a city at this point. These are places like Tibbets, Troy Center and Allens Grove among others. Which town do you live in? Do you live in a village or city? If so, which one? Do you live in a rural area of the county? If so, in which town or township?

WALWORTH COUNTY'S NATURAL FEATURES

Among the many natural features of Walworth County are the well known lakes. There are about 34 named lakes within the county. Some of the lakes are created by dams in creeks and streams throughout Walworth County like Como Creek —creating Lake Como, Spring Brook—creating Cravath Lake, Whitewater Creek —creating Tripp Lake and the White River, creating Lake Geneva. Other lakes are kettle hole lakes which were created as the glaciers—thick sheets of ice—melted away leaving large chunks of ice making indentations in the ground around the county many thousands of years ago. These thick sheets of ice called glaciers that once covered nearly all the area we call Walworth County today many thousands of years ago also left behind odd shaped hills such as the egg-shaped drumlins, winding snake-like hills called eskers and the rather steep sided small hills called kames. These were all left behind as ice melted away.

NATIVE AMERICANS ONCE LIVED IN WALWORTH COUNTY

The most recent and last band of Native Americans to live in Walworth County were Potawatomi. Their name means "keepers of the fire." Several bands of Potawatomi likely lived in the Walworth county area of today. There were several larger Potawatomi tribes that lived in several places in what is now known as the United States and Canada.

Theses Native Americans eventually lost their land either through warfare or by treaty with Anglo-American settlers. This led to the relocation of the Potawatomi tribe to Iowa, Kansas, and Oklahoma--some peaceably by treaty, others on forced marches by gunpoint. Some groups of Potawatomi Indians remained in the Great Lakes region by fleeing into Canada, finding refuge with their Ojibwe allies, or negotiating with their white neighbors; others still live in Kansas or Oklahoma today.

Potawatomi Man
Na-Se-Ka c.1890

The last known band of Potawatomi of about 500 members in Walworth County lived at the south western edge of Lake Geneva under the peaceful leadership of Chief Big Foot.

For more info on these Native Americans visit http://www.bigorrin.org/potawatomi_kids.htm

WIGWAM

LIVING QUARTERS OF WISCONSIN AND WALWORTH COUNTY NATIVE AMERICANS

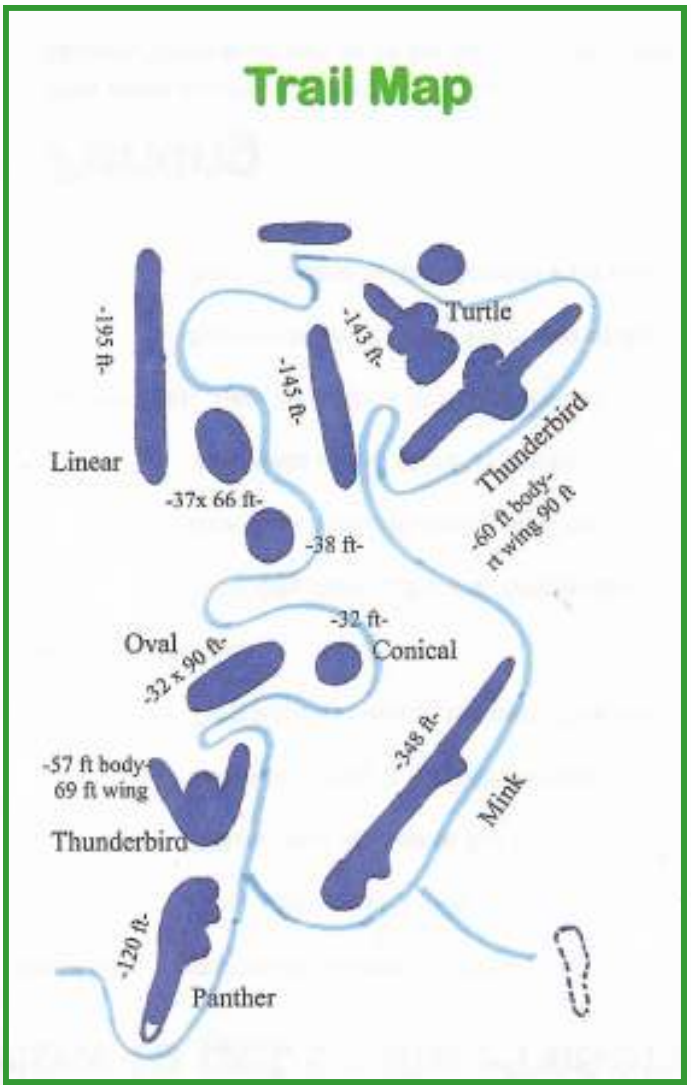
The Potawatomi who were the last Native Americans to live in Walworth County often lived in a dome-shaped hut or tent. These tents were made by fastening mats made of animal hides or tree bark over a framework of poles made from tree branches, as pictured above.

A medicine lodge was a special building or structure used by certain Native American peoples for their special religious and other ceremonies. Often these buildings were made in much the same as their living quarters or wigwams.

"WHILE WE READ HISTORY, WE M,AKE HISTORY."

MEDICINE LODGE

WHITEWATER EFFIGY MOUNDS PRESERVE



"All dreams spin out from the same web."

— **Hopi**

This Trail Map shows the location of the Native American mounds found in the Effigy Mounds Preserve in Whitewater, Walworth County, Wisconsin. Note the several different animal shapes and the other geometric shapes of these mounds. What questions or History Mysteries come to your mind as you study the Native Americans of Walworth County? Where could you look for answers to your questions?

WHITEWATER MOUNDS PRESERVE: SAVING NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE

Early white settlers in Whitewater discovered that there are a number of Native American or Indian mounds located on the west side of Whitewater. As seen on the map on page 6, some of these built up piles of soil are in the shape of animals such as a panther, turtle, mink, and thunderbird. Others are in the form of circles, lines and cones. It is very likely that inside these mounds of soil are the burials of Native Americans. So this is a cemetery which may contain the burials of some thirteen people of a very early Indian culture in the area we call Whitewater, Walworth County, Wisconsin today. These mounds have been preserved and can be seen by walking along a trail outlined on the map you see to the left. Rules of proper behavior are on a sign just outside the entrance.

NATIVE TERMS FOR COUNTY PLACES

Big Foot—Mauk-suek

Duck Lake [now Lake Como]—She-shiep-bess

Geneva Lake—Kish-wau-ke-toe

Honey Creek—Mish-qua-woc

Sugar Creek—Sis-po-quet-se-pee

Whitewater—Wau-be-gan-naw-pe-kat

Source: Albert C. Beckwith. HISTORY OF WALWORTH COUNTY, Volume 1, 1912. Page 41.

"IF WE WONDER OFTEN, THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE WILL COME."
— **ARAPAHO**

CHIEF "BIG FOOT" OF THE GENEVA LAKE AREA POTAWATOMI

Potawatomi Chief Big Foot once lived with his small tribe along the shore of Geneva Lake in Walworth County.

This drawing shows how his camp may have looked.

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"...COLLECTING, PRESERVING AND SHARING THE RICH HISTORY OF WALWORTH COUNTY..."

HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE ARCHIVES OF THE DORIS M. REINKE RESOURCE CENTER

Big Foot High School with this statue in the Village of Walworth in Walworth County is named in honor of Chief Big Foot of the Potawatomi Native Americans who once lived in the area.

HISTORY'S MYSTERIES

Now that you have gotten a start learning about the county you go to school and live in what questions or mysteries come to your mind? Where could you look or who could you ask to find answers to your questions?

You may find some answers to some of your mysteries or questions in up-coming editions of "Legacy for Kids." Here are several topics you can look forward to in up coming issues:

Early white settlers and why they came to Walworth County; early settlements; living conditions of early settlers; agriculture develops in our county; inventors, musicians, our famous Walworth County Fair; Yerkes Observatory and more! We hope you enjoyed this issue and will like the issues to come. Keep asking questions and finding answers to History's Mysteries!!

Mystery is the magnet of inquiry."
-Edward Counsel