



RUSHFORD

AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

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THANK YOU ARLIN FALCK FOUNDATION & MIENERGY

Recently the Arlin Falck Foundation granted RAHS \$50,000. This will go a long way towards replacing the historic depot's roof and making other repairs.

MiEnergy's Operation RoundUp program also provided a \$1,000 grant towards the roof.



RAHS board receiving the MiEnergy grant: Jack O'Donnell, Treas.; Terri Benson, Pres.; Nancy Snyder, Dir.; Sally Ryman, Sec; Anne Spartz, Historian; Kari Meyer, VP; Jackie Becker, Dir.

RAISE THE ROOF! (and more)

Constructed in 1867, the Rushford depot is thought to be the last two-story depot still standing in its original location on the Southern Minnesota Railroad (later the Milwaukee Road). Many of our readers likely remember the fundraising that enabled RAHS to purchase the building for \$10,000 in 1987 and the fundraisers and thousands of hours of volunteer help to restore the depot.

We need your help again. A Facilities Conditions Assessment (FCA) completed in April 2021 and a more invasive assessment in November 2021 indicate that much needs to be done to rehab the building. The northwest corner has significant settlement, especially since the August 2007 flood. Settlement and shifting extend to the second floor and walls. We applied for a Minnesota State Historical Society (MNHS) grant to stabilize the foundation. Although it wasn't approved this year, we were encouraged to resubmit it and hope to get it funded next year.

The 2021 FCA also identified that the roof has deteriorated and should be replaced.

The depot is one of the principal historic buildings in our community. Replacing the roof and addressing the other issues identified in the FCA are essential for ensuring the building can be used by residents, students, and visitors to our town for many years to come.

13 SALOONS & A BREWERY IN RUSHFORD!?!?!

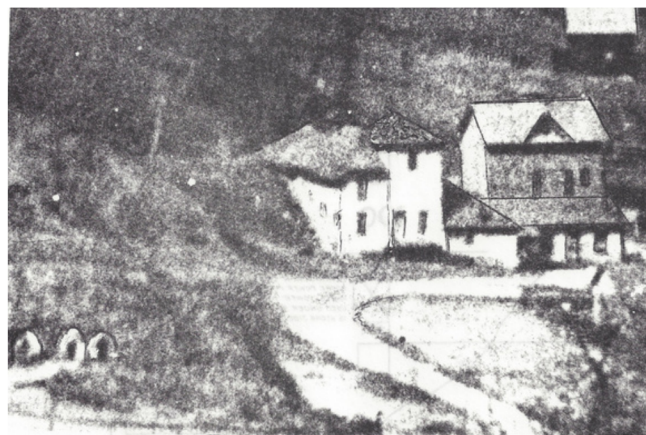
by Nancy Snyder

The Rushford Brewery was built in 1867, changing hands a few times before being purchased in 1875 by Jacob Pfeiffer. The brewery could produce up to 10 barrels of beer per day.

Pfeiffer brewed beer for the saloons in north and south Rushford and other "outside markets." There were at least 13 saloons in Rushford prior to prohibition. He would deliver his brew to local saloons in his wagon, accompanied by his faithful dog.

The kegs of beer were sealed shut with rosin, which local children would pick off for chewing gum.

The aging cellar was constructed in a unique way using stacked stone forming a dome, devoid of mortar and covered with earth. The brewery and main aging cellar were located at 303 N Elm Street and had cooling cellars dug into the hillside behind what is now the Windswept Inn.



THE RUSHFORD BREWERY, 303 N. ELM STREET

Jacob Pfeiffer's son, John, suffered a horrible death after falling into a vat of boiling water at the brewery. His high boots made escape from the scalding water difficult, and he died within 10 hours after the accident.

After John's death, Jacob (then age 78) tried to operate the brewery, but he passed away the following year due to complications from a gall stone operation.

After John's death the brewery property, also known as the Sandhill Brewery, changed hands several times before finally ceasing operations and closing in 1909.

The original brewery building was eventually purchased by Ole Bratland who, after tearing down the wooden building, reused the lumber in the construction of a residence. The arched stone cellar was left intact, being used for storage of butter, eggs, and other perishables.

Reference: Dr. Alden Droivold's History of Rushford Volume III "Whiskey, Wheat and Wagons"

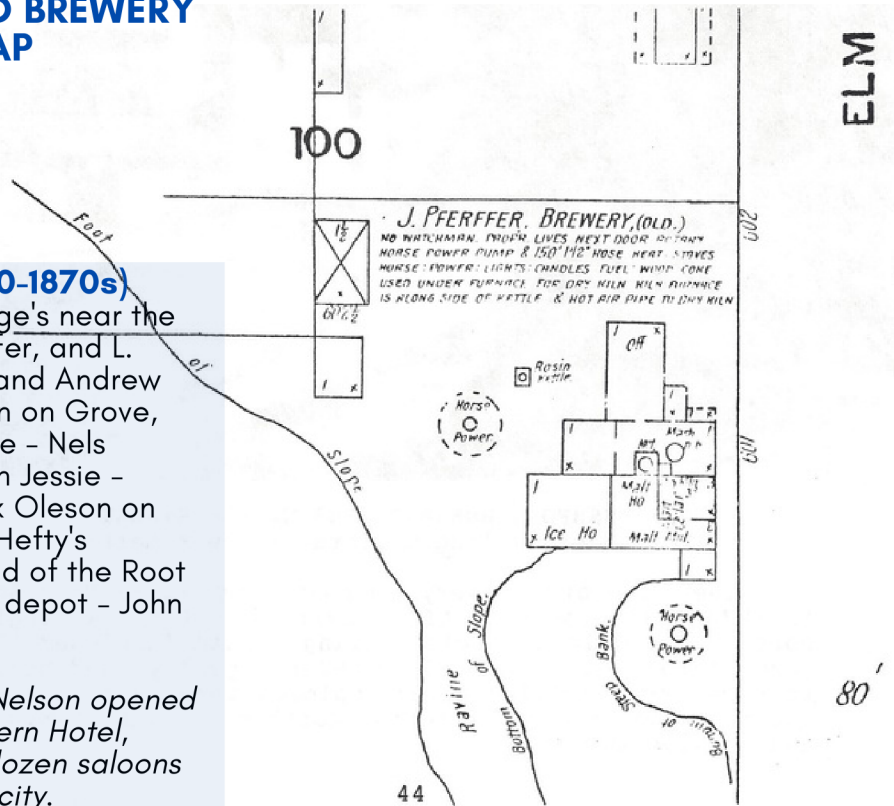
THE PFEIFFER RUSHFORD BREWERY FACILITIES MAP

RUSHFORD SALOONS (1850-1870s)

Hulbert's on Mill & Grove - B.F. Dodge's near the depot - M. Jensen's, Oulhous & Keiffer, and L. Larson's on Mill - William Maloney's and Andrew Nash's on Maple, Andrew M. Johnson on Grove, Morse & Co./Sone Knutson on Grove - Nels Johnson ran the Northwestern Bar on Jessie - Christ Sanderson on Maple - Gullick Oleson on Grtove - C.J. Johnson on Mill - Mat Hefty's People's Saloon was at the north end of the Root River bridge on Elm across from the depot - John Nelson's Winona Beer Hall on Jessie

In 1872 Aslag Gunderson and A.O. Nelson opened a saloon across from the Northwestern Hotel, believing the city needed an even dozen saloons to properly handle the trade of the city.

In 1873, the Rushford City Council set a license fee of \$100 to sell intoxicating beverages; 9 licenses were granted as well as 3 druggist licenses to sell intoxicating liquids.

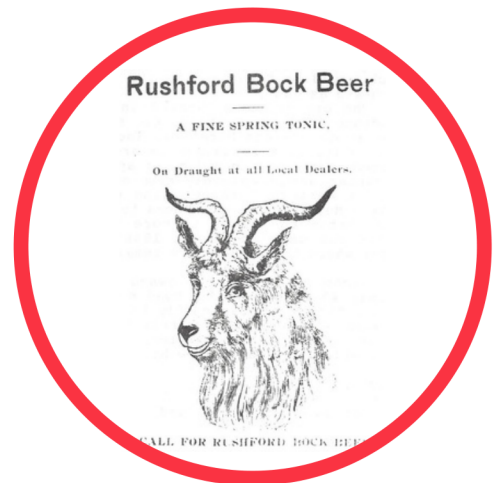


t-shirts are a Fun Christmas present



Nancy Snyder, Kari Meyer, Anne Spartz & Jackie Becker

RAHS has t-shirts celebrating this notable piece of Rushford's past. The Rushford Lager shirts cost \$20 and are available in brown and the green that our models are wearing. Contact any RAHS board member to purchase a t-shirt and support RAHS.



Should this be a t-shirt? Let us know your opinion!!!

PRESIDENT'S NOTES

by Terri Benson

Another year has passed and the RAHS board has accomplished so much and is looking forward to the upcoming years.

The mission of the Rushford Area Historical Society is to preserve and share the stories of our community. Your donations of money, artifacts and time are really appreciated in delivering on that mission.

As we have learned, change is the one constant in life (and history). With that in mind but remembering that our mission will always remain the same - preserve and share - the RAHS board has decided to upgrade the financial revenue structure of the organization by establishing donation levels rather than memberships. By establishing a donation structure, you will be recognized for your donations and volunteer support over time. Donors will be recognized (if desired) in the annual newsletter and on the depot's WALL OF SUPPORT (which will be located in the visitors center of the depot).

**** NEW ****

MONETARY DONATION LEVELS

Bronze (up to \$49)

Silver (\$50-\$99)

Gold (\$100-\$499)

Platinum (+\$500)

VOLUNTEER HOUR LEVELS

Bronze (up to 19 hours)

Silver (20 - 29 hrs)

Gold (30 - 49 hrs)

Platinum (+50 hrs)

Your donations make a difference

Donations support the great work that the RAHS Board and volunteers do to preserve the stories of our collective history; stories that need to be kept and shared.

Our annual operational expenses average \$5,500. Currently, the RAHS Board is working on a large restoration project for the depot and actively pursuing grant money to meet that financial amount. The general maintenance of these structures is ongoing and are evaluated in the board meetings and budget reviews.

Your annual donation is a great way to support our community's legacy. We also welcome memorials and "in-honor" donations of any size.

A donation form is included on page 8 for you to use in supporting HIS-STORY, HER-STORY, OUR-STORY - THE RUSHFORD AREA!

As mentioned earlier, the RAHS board and volunteers have accomplished many things this year.

Genealogy meetings with families - *Anne Spartz, Sally Ryman, Jen Hengel*

Continuing to add Inventory items to the Past Perfect Database - *Diane Luhmann*

Received donated artifacts that are historic and about our area - *Anne Spartz, Terri Benson, Jack O'Donnell, Beth Nelson*

Updated displays in museum - *Nancy Snyder, Jackie Becker, Jack O'Donnell, Terri Benson, Sally Ryman, Tony Becker and crew*

Library and office created - *Terri Benson, Nancy Rustad, Nancy Snyder, Jack O'Donnell, Jen Hengel*

Built new office desk - *Jack and Jim O'Donnell*

Grant application processing - *Sally Ryman, Kari Meyer and Jackie Becker*

Historic t-shirts with Rushford Lager Beer by Jacob Pfeiffer logo - *Sally Ryman*

Assisted with the Business Opportunity Tour put on by the Rushford Peterson Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Rushford EDA - *Nancy Snyder, Nancy Rustad, Diane Luhmann, Jack O'Donnell, Kari Meyer, Jackie Becker, Sally Ryman, Terri Benson*

City of Rushford Public works crew will be trimming tree branches that are leaning on the Depot

R-P seniors moved items around in the historic buildings and trimmed some trees with *Jack O'Donnell*. Always good to have "young" backs doing heavy lifting



More is planned for 2023

Working with the Rushford Public Library on their 100th Anniversary celebration and developing some co-sponsored programs

Finalizing a Minnesota Historical Society grant application for the re-stabilization of the Depot's foundation

Fundraising for the new roof needed on the Depot

An Eagle Scout project is in the works that will enhance the old city jail's walkway, and add protective window coverings and landscaping the front

Creating more school displays in the Grinde School house and log cabin from generous community donations

Cleaning up and re-designing the garden on the East side of the Depot

The list is always growing as more ideas are generated. And as you can see the need for your donations are genuine. We are excited to bring a sense of commitment and inspiration to you and our community.

THANK YOU for being a part of the Rushford Area storytelling.



THEATRES IN RUSHFORD *by Kari Meyer*

The following excerpts are from Dr. Alden O. Droivold's History of Rushford Volume VI: A View from Main Street. Copies are available to read or purchase at the depot.

1909 - The first motion picture was shown in Rushford. The Electric Theatre Co. leased the opera house and provided "moral entertainment" for 10 cents.

**ELITE THEATRE
OPENED 1911**



1910 - The Elite Moving Picture Show by Eggen and Sundby provided motion pictures in Woodman Hall.

1911 - The Elite Theater moved to the SE corner of Mill and Jessie Streets, and Chas. Nichols became the new proprietor. A small orchestra provided theme music and sound effects for the silent movies. The cost was 5 cents for children and 10 cents for 12 and older.

1916 - Manager Radtke brought in up-to-the minute pictures from Paramount, Metro and Mutual.

1917 - Debt, railroad service issues and an ill wife, prompted Radtke to move the equipment in the middle of the night to his wife's grandfather, O.K. Quarve, who continued the theater in the Opera House at 106-108 Jessie Street.

1919 - Manager Quarve showed "The Americano" and "Fight for Millions" starring Douglas Fairbanks. Admission was 10 cents for children and 20 cents for adults.

1929 - Talking shows came to Rushford in February when Quarve secured Synchronatone for the Opera House. The singing and talking pictures were shown for two days.

1930 - Rushford finally had a "talkie" show house when sound was permanently installed in the Opera House.

1937 - The grand opening of the Royal Theatre featured "Gold Diggers of 1937," "Reunion" and "Get Along Little Dogies."

**ROYAL THEATRE
OPENED 1937**



**TROJAN THEATRE
OPENED 1949**



Rushford Theatre Milestone and Fun Facts continued...

1940 - The Royal Theatre was sold to Roy Palmquist. When Palmquist went into the military, Mrs. Lynda Quarve Noyes operated the theatre for five years. One of the pictures shown was "Roll on Texas Moon" with Roy Rogers and Gabby Hayes

1948 - Fire destroyed The Royal Theatre and other buildings. Arson was suspected, and Sheriff Donald Cook apprehended Richard Mortimer, a 24-year-old from Baraboo, Wisc., who was staying with relatives in the Rushford area. He confessed and was sentenced to seven to ten years.

1949 - Rushford Theatres Inc. was formed by Clarence Loerch, D.S. Prinzing and Roy Stephans. Matt Barry will manage. Art Bakken was contracted to build a theatre for \$60,000. The newly constructed Trojan Theatre opened in August. Ticket prices were 40 cents for children and 50 cents for adults.

1951 - Matt Barry leases the theatre from Rushford Theaters Inc. and becomes the sole proprietor.

1954 - Warren Betzinger takes over the theater and runs high grade pictures.

1971 - Rushford teenagers take over. Successive groups of teenagers run the theater until 1975

1975 - The Trojan Theater closes permanently.

TO-NITE
AT
THE Elite
HIGH CLASS PHOTOPLAYS

Mary Pickford
AND
King Baggot
in
"Mr. Burglar M. D."
One of those good Comedy-Dramas that please.

"The Baited Trap"
2-part Imp with King Baggot in his own play. A drama you'll want to see without fail.

"Nutty and his Father"
Comedy introducing one of the smallest actors in the world.

4 Reels, 3 with King Baggot and one with the highest priced actress in the world, little Mary Pickford.

YOU ARE INVITED
Only 5c and 10c
TO-NIGHT
1915

Grand Opening
of the
Royal Theatre
Rushford, Minn.

Having completed remodeling, we invite the public to come to Rushford, see our new theatre, and enjoy a good show in one of the best equipped theatres in Southern Minnesota.

Friday and Saturday, April 16 and 17
"Gold Diggers of 1937"
With Joan Blondell and Dick Powell, Glenda Farrell, Victor Moore
It's Sparkling and sublime--It's Everything that a mighty costly extravaganza should be--It's Tops. Also Fox News and 2-reel Short

Sun., Mon., Tues., April 18-19-20
The Dionne Quintuplets in
"REUNION"
With Jean Hersholt, Rochelle Hudson and Helen Vinson
See the Five Little Starlets. The World's Front Page Sweethearts
Also March of Time

Wednesday and Thursday, Apr. 21-22
"Get Along Little Dogies"
With Smiley Burnette and Judith Allen
Also 2-Reel Comedy
Bank Night Changed to Mid week Show
1937

Royal Theatre
Friday, Saturday, June 24-25--Double Feature
No. 1. The Three Mesquiteers in "Gunsmoke Ranch"
No. 2. Hopalong Cassidy in "Three on the Trail"
Admission 10c and 25c

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, June 26-27-28

GOLD DIGGERS IN PARIS

"Don Voyage, Cherri! We'll See You... in Paris!"
with
RUDY VALLEE
ROSEMARY LANE
HUGH HERBERT
ALLEN JENKINS
and THE SCHNICKELFRITZ BAND
GLORIA DICKSON-MELVILLE COOPER
MABEL TODD - FRITZ FELD
A WARNER BROS. Picture
Directed by RAY ENRIGHT
Musical Numbers Created and Directed by Bobby Berkeley

3 Shows Sunday. Matinee at 2:30. Admission 10c, 25c
Evening Admission 10c, 25c 35c
Monday and Tuesday one show at 8:00 sharp

Wednesday and Thursday, June 29-30
"NO TIME TO MARRY"
With Mary Astor and Richard Arlen
Admission 10c and 25c
6-24-1938

The NEW TROJAN THEATRE
RUSHFORD

Wed. & Thurs., Oct. 5 and 6
THE SEARCH
A picture of interest to the whole family.
CARTOON

Fri. and Sat., Oct. 7 and 8
LOADED PISTOLS
Gene Autry and Champion
An action packed picture for every red blooded American.
3 Stoooge Comedy - Sport Reel

Sun., Mon., Tues., Oct. 9, 10, 11
CANADIAN PACIFIC
Cinecolor with Randolph Scott and Jane Wyatt
Untamed! The men who carved an empire from a savage wilderness.
NEWS and CARTOON

Wed. & Thurs., Oct. 12 and 13
A NIGHT AT THE OPERA
with the MARX Brothers
A hilarious comedy such as only the Marx Bros. can make.
CARTOON and SPORT



Yes, I will help RAHS in its mission to preserve and share the stories of our community, maintain our historic buildings, and restore the depot.



Here is my tax-deductible gift of:

Bronze (up to \$49) Silver (\$50-\$99) Gold (\$100-\$499) Platinum (+\$500)

Name _____

Address _____

Please recognize me in donor listings as follows:_____



I wish to remain anonymous.

Other ways to give:

Volunteer: *email rahsdepot@gmail.com or contact one of the board members for details*
Bronze (up to 19 hours); Silver (20-29 hrs); Gold (30-49 hrs); Platinum (+50 hrs)

- ✓ I would like to donate in memory of: _____
- ✓ I would like to learn about including RAHS in my estate plans. Please contact me.
- ✓ I would like to donate stock or Thrivent contributions. Please contact me.

Thank you for your generous support!

Please send your donation to: RAHS, PO Box 98, Rushford, MN 55971
Questions? Contact rahsdepot@gmail.com



PO Box 98
Rushford, MN 55971