



PROUDLY BUILDING OUR HERITAGE

Hartland Hearsay

NEWSLETTER OF THE HARTLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

P.O. Box 54, Hartland, Wisconsin

January 2011

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Next Meeting:

January 6th, 6:30 pm

Michelle Andrae's Home
256 W. Capitol Drive

Go through the arch and
enter by the west door.

Quote

Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Make the most of
yourself for that is all
there is of you."



The Early Day of Hartland's Mill Pond

Located just north of today's East Capitol Drive stood Hartland's mill pond. Allowed to dry up after the demolition of the dam under Capitol Drive, many local citizens thought the old mill pond should have been preserved as a lake. A contributing author submitted this nostalgic article in remembrance of early days of the mill pond.

Hartland News and Dairyman

March 2, 1907

"In the early history of Hartland, perhaps nothing was more striking or played a more useful part in the developing the town than the old mill pond. Stretching away to the northeast for over three quarter of a mile with a width of 300 feet, it arose to almost the dignity of a lake. On a calm summer day, it seemed to peacefully reflect the quiet life of the town, but when the boisterous north winds of spring or fall came down, the foam-capped waves beat with relentless fury on the roadway, threatening its destruction and inspiring the beholder with awe. In fact, to a Rip Van Winkle set down in Hartland after many years absence, the most notable change in nature is the absence of the surrounding forests and the old mill pond.

Over sixty years ago the plan was conceived to utilize Bark river at this point as a water power and the erection of a dyke or dam was begun which later became part of the principal street of Hartland. Then came the sawmill, soon followed by the erection of a gristmill of extensive proportions. Both were in active operation many years, but the gristmill lasted much the longest and was finally destroyed by fire some years ago.

Boats were kept by many who lived adjacent to the pond and the echo of oar and song was frequently heard on pleasant days and moonlight nights. Fish were plentiful and a weird night scene was the flaming torches of boats manned by fishermen armed with long handled spears, slowly moving about on the water, while trolling from the banks was a favorite pastime with many. The north end of the pond was thickly settled with muskrats and their conical shaped abodes were probed with spears, and traps were placed near for their capture in winter. Then there was the beautiful and sweet smelling lily whose fragrance almost reaches us from that far-off time. The spring freshets often swelled the old pond to undue proportions till the outlet proved too small, and the bridge and dam were carried away with a mighty roar. Then a ferry would be in operation for a day or two.

But the carnival time was in winter when crowds of merry skaters cut magical capers on the ice, and before the girls got to using skates, they were seated on sled and pushed along by some kind friend. Whirligigs were also in operation which gave a very exciting "merry-go-round" ride, often ending disastrously. At night a bon-fire would often add to the interest and sentiment of the occasion.

Ah! Yes, vision of the past rise before the eyes of many today, who recall with a sigh familiar scenes and faces of the long ago, and among many pleasant memories not the least is that of the old mill pond."



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Hartland, WI 53029

E-mail:
HartlandHistory@wi.rr.com

Would you like to attend a Meeting?

We welcome all members to
our meetings! Please

call and let us know if you'd
like to attend.

262-367-2979. Check us out
online at:

www.hartlandhistory.com

Please send in your 2011 Membership Dues!



Membership Application

Please mail to: PO Box 54, Hartland, WI 53029

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email: _____

Dues are as follows (Make checks payable to Hartland Historical Society):

Single: \$10 / year **Family: \$15 / year** **Senior: \$7 / year** **Senior Family: \$10 / year**

Additional Funds Donated _____

Any additional funds donated is greatly appreciated! Thank you for supporting the Hartland Historical Society!