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The 1929 Plot Map and the 2010 Street map display the road as it was set up in those periods of time.

[1929 Plot Map](#)

[2010 Street Map](#)



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[John S Monroe](#)

Wausaukee Area History Page 1

Touch a picture for an enlarged view.

Touch underlined text for expanded document.

History Version 11152010



John S. Munroe's Log Cabin



Built in 1883 by [John S. Munroe](#), the log cabin was one of three original buildings that made up the community of loggers that started what would later become the Village of Wausaukee. Monroe shipped timber, cedar posts, pilings and railroad ties from this tiny community. The Log cabin served as a boarding house, hotel, post office and the only eatery north of Green Bay for many years . [Formation of Marinette Townships & Communities](#)



John & Jane Belton Monroe



Monroe Men's Room



Monroe House Parlor



Monroe House Kitchen



Main Street View of Monroe House

In 1885 [John Monroe](#) was appointed postmaster and the log cabin became the first post office which gave the community some validation. As the lumber boom brought more men to the north woods, the cabin became an Inn and eating place to lodge the many travelers to the area. The Monroe cabin was originally built on the site where Smith's Hwy 141

[Harland P. Bird](#)

[John Hoff](#)

[George E Bogrand](#)

[Everix Family](#)

[Debot & DeRoeck](#)

[Payant Family](#)

[Idlebek Family](#)

[Justine Debot
DeGroot](#)

[Seth J Ferdon](#)

Family Trees

[Victor Debot](#)

[Louis Slaets - Wuyts](#)

[Idlebeck /Edelbeck](#)

[Tomas Idlbek](#)

[De Laet](#) (66 Page PDF)

[Nejedlo](#)

[Bourdeau](#)

[Bourdeau 2](#)

Obituaries



Wausaukee Evergreen
Cemetery Archive

Grave listings through
www.findagrave.com.

This is an ongoing archive
with anyone allowed to
enter obituaries, photos
and stories about
individuals buried in any
cemetery with in the US.

[PDF Historical
Obituaries](#)

[Victor Debot](#)

[Mrs. Louis Slaets](#)

[Hank Laun](#)

grocery is currently located.

Meals were 25 cents and room and board for a month was \$26.00. The Men's room located on the north end of the first floor forbid women from entering.

The parlor photo shows Libby on the far left, Eliza to the right with unidentified friends of the family. The view of Monroe house is looking toward the North east.

Guests found a warm welcome in the dining room of the Monroe House. Wallace Monroe is identified as the man at the table and his sister Helen Elizabeth is standing.

Monroe and his family were the first white settlers to locate in Wausaukee. John Monroe shipped the first carload of forest products that went out of that village over the Milwaukee & Northern railroad. He built a station there in 1883 and called it Wausaukee.

John S. Monroe died on March 25, 1900 at the age of 77 years. Bird & Wells sawmill was shut down for the funeral so that all could attend. The funeral was held at their residence and was the largest attended funeral ever held. Jane Belton Monroe followed her husband in death May 14, 1901.



Helen Elizabeth
(Libby) Monroe



Eliza Monroe

John and Jane Monroe had five children, Sarah, who died in infancy; John Wallace; Helen Elizabeth, often known as "Libby"; Eliza Mae; and Harry. Libby and Eliza ran the Monroe establishment until about 1935, but declined selling it to interested parties for fear liquor would be served on the premises.

Roy Gustaveson purchased the property in 1942 to make way for his hardware and implement business.

Harlan P. Bird



Senator Harlan P
Bird



Harlan Bird
Residence On
Riverside Ave



H. P. Bird Free
Library

[Harlan P. Bird](#) was born August 2nd, 1838, the son of a Smithfield Pennsylvania farmer. His partnership with J. W. Wells was to benefit the community with its successful logging operations. H. P. Bird was very involved in community projects through out his life. In 1902 he was elected to State Senator and served two four year terms. Bird was married in 1869 to Sarah J. Fairchild who died in 1904. His married his second wife, Laura D. Mott of Danville ILL. in 1906.

Bird was well known for his interest in community affairs, and his

[Amable Bourdeau](#)

[Gerald DeGroot](#)

[PDF Files require the free Adobe Reader to open the document. If you do not have it follow our link.](#)

Museum Web Site Links

[Amberg Museum](#)

[peshtigofire.info/](#)

[Link to Museum Listings Page](#)

[Nine Marinette / Menominee County Museums](#)

Contributions to our archive of photos is welcome. We will copy your image and add it to the historical images we keep on file.

We are always on the lookout for images that fill in the historical gaps.

Images of older buildings, families and the stories behind them are always welcome.

brian@gipphoto.com

philanthropy. He was in the forefront of many village issues, including campaigns for the establishment of a high school, installation of streetlights, and the organization of the bank. In 1902 he established the Wausaukee Free Library that contained approximately 1500 books and hoped it would prove "sufficiently popular to draw from places of evil resort." He worked with Lutrie Stearns, a prominent State Librarian, to establish the collection and open the building to the public.

However, after spending a large amount of money on the project, he was forced to abandon the library. It was one of the great disappointments of his life. After closing the Library he donated all the books to the High School and the entire collection was lost in the [school fire of 1913](#). Additional Information concerning the Harlan P Bird library building <http://heritage.wisconsinlibraries.org/2010/01/wausaukees-first-free-library.html>

Bird suffered a stroke teaching Sunday School in 1910 and made a full recovery but his second stroke ended his life and an era in Wausaukee History.

Saw Mill History



[Bird & Wells Saw Mill](#)



[Bird & Wells Sawmill](#)



[Bird & Wells Store / Headquarters building](#)



[View showing Laun Bros Lumber and the School](#)



[Laun's Lumber Yard](#)

1st Mill: The first sawmill in Wausaukee was built by a firm named Beach & Bishop. The company built a dam across the Wausaukee river in the village about where the bridge on US-141 is now located to form a mill pond in which to store their logs, and located their mill at the dam's south end, which was the site of the Wausaukee Recreation building. Beach & Bishop logged most of their timber and after the 1892 fire that burned their mill, they sold their plant and yard to Bird & Wells.

2nd Mill: In 1887 [J.W. Wells](#) and [H.P. Bird](#) visited Wausaukee and leased a small saw mill that would start a new era for this area. Full scale production started in 1888 when the mill was expanded, 2000 acres of pine lands were purchased and rail lines were completed to haul the lumber to market.

The Bird & Wells Lumber company also conducted a store in the village, which was one of the first stores in Wausaukee. This store went out of business in about the year 1910, a short time before the mill was closed and dismantled.

[Read the first Independent Volume I article about the Bird & Wells Saw Mills](#)

3rd Mill: An official of the Milwaukee and Northern railroad by the name of Dutton built the third sawmill in Wausaukee. It was located at the southern limits of the Village. Dutton operated the mill for a time and then sold it to Laun Brothers of Kiel, Wisconsin. Dutton opened another mill in Dunbar WI.

Laun Brothers History: The first Laun connection with Wausaukee was in approximately 1893 when a 16 year old boy, Henry G Laun was sent by his father, John Henry, and his older brother, Jacob, from Kiel, Wisconsin up to the far north (125 Miles) to secure a supply of lumber for their fledging furniture factory. H.G. purchased the sawmill & his brother

Jacob financed it. It soon employed about 300 people. HG and other lumber barrons harvested all of the virgin timber, mostly red and white pine, in the nearby territory.

Logging camps were established throughout the area to supply the timber needed for these mills. All the sawmills owned their own tracks of land and clear cut the timber, leaving stumps and then later returning the land to the county for failure to pay taxes or selling it to immigrants for farming. There was no interest at the time to reforest.

The Loggers and Sawmill Workers



Loggers



Horse Teams



Logging Sled



Train



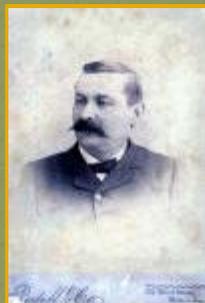
Lumber Camps

Logging was a back breaking, dangerous living where men were injured frequently at the logging sites, tending oxen, sleds, horse teams and at the mill. The work paid well but the accidents were many times fatal.

Obituary: Daniel F Johnson : Volume 81 Number 1371-- May 30, 1891 Saint John Daily Telegraph --

Amasa Clayton b 1851 at New Brunswick, d 10 May 1891 at Wausauke, Wisconsin. The 'Peshtigo Argus' of Peshtigo Wisconsin related that Amasa Clayton, of Wausauke, while engaged in felling a tree, was struck by a limb and almost instantly killed, only living an half hour. Mr. Clayton has been engaged in lumbering for past 10 years. His remains were brought to this province for interment. The deceased was the eldest s/o W.B. Clayton of Sheffield (Sunbury Co. Canada)]

Shortly after the Dutton's mill at Dunbar began operating, the mill company there built a five mile stretch of standard gauge logging railroad that ran south east out of Dunbar toward Wausauke, and the Milwaukee railroad built 10 miles of track from its main line at Wausauke to connect with it. This 15 miles of railroad was known as the Dunbar & Wausauke railroad. At Dunbar it connected with the Soo Line and Wausauke it connected with the Milwaukee Road main line. The Dunbar company sold its five miles of logging railroad to the Milwaukee Road. This road operated for some time and then was abandoned, the tracks torn up and the rails sold. This occurred around the time of the first World War.



There was a good sized settlement called Hoffstown, a short distance south of Wausauke, that in early days might be considered a part of the Village. It was owned and operated by a man named **John Hoff**, who

came here from Forest Junction, Wisconsin in 1886 and purchased about 600 acres of virgin timber land. All that is left of Hoffstown now, is his large farm that was located across the tracks opposite his little settlement.

Land sellers would boast of opportunities for owning your own farm, bring in the people by train and do a quick and very controlled tour of the area, not allowing the prospects to talk to any locals so they only heard the land sellers side of the story. Much of the land once cleared of stumps, was not suitable for farming purposes due to the soil content but that did not stop the unscrupulous Land sellers from selling parcels to the unwary immigrants. The story of Cutover Country is an example of the hardship endured by the immigrants trying to establish a living in the unsuitable environment sold to them.

Lumber camps were spread throughout the area to lodge the workers who brought the forest products to market.

Bird & Wells sold their property and mill to HG Laun when they closed the mill. The mill & machinery were dismantled and parts were sold to other mill operators. HG then developed part of the property to store coal and cement for his growing merchandise business and sold several lots to people who built homes on the land.

Growth at the Turn of the Century



C.M. & S.P.
Railway



Wausauke Depot
Approx 1910



Wausauke
Railroad Station



1900 Village Main
St looking north
west



1900 Village Main
St looking north
east

Few people have an idea of the immense business conducted by the C.M. & S.P. railway each year at this station. The beer alone received here weighed 181,140 pounds equal to 3,282 barrels. The depot contained two waiting rooms, the north for passengers and the south for railroad workers. Each was equipped with a pot bellied cast iron coal stove to maintain warmth in the winter for waiting passengers and crew.

Eight passenger trains arrived daily and freight trains swept through the village every 20 minutes. In the 1930's passenger trains traveled from Marquette MI to Chicago IL with wealthy customers being dropped off to go to the private Wausauke Club in Athelstane WI.

Follow the history of all the connecting railroad spurs from Florence, Dickinson and Marinette Counties as they moved the lumber from camps to mills throughout the area. [History of the Interconnecting Railroads.](#)

The town boasted numerous stores, barbershops, an undertaking parlor, distillery, three livery stables and a meat market, not to mention twelve saloons. [Adams & Ruggles Distillery](#) was built on May 19, 1900 . The main building was 22x28 feet and was used as a fermenting and mashing room. The daily capacity was 14 gallons of corn and rye whiskey. Two vats totaling 130 gallons capacity took approximately 72 hours to make corn whiskey and 96 hours for rye. The building was destroyed by fire 2 years later.

Carts and buggies filled the streets and churned up the mud or dust, depending on the season, while pedestrians clung to the safety of the wooden sidewalks.



H.P. Christ Farm & Silos - Frank Orlando Farm



H.P. Christ & Daughter Catherine Home



Wausauke Feed Mill



Christ Feed Mill



Hop McVey Barber

Coming into town from the south on US 141, The first buildings noticed on the east side of the highway were two large white barns with the name "H P CHRIST" painted on the side. The dairy farm was sold to Frank Orlando in the late 1930's. F. E. Mitchell leased the field just south of the barns and grazed his cows there each day, bringing them back to an in-town barn each evening.

H.P. Christ and his unmarried daughter, Katherine shared the home. H.P and his brother Frank went to Mass every morning. When HP died, Katherine turned the house into a rooming house. Ed Johnson who worked at Laun Hardware was one of her roomers.

The Wausauke Feed Mill was built by H. P. Christ in the early 1900's and was equipped for grinding flour and storage of grain, which later was shipped by railcar. Harvey Bartels of Green Bay remodeled the building with grinding and mixing equipment and opened up a feed mill operation in the 1940's. [Read the 1978 Peshtigo Times Article](#)

Several owners over the years ran the mill including, Harvey Bartels of Green Bay, Norm Smith and the last was Mitch Wengiel who purchased it from Smith. Norm said that Harvey was so much competition he had to buy him out in the 1950's. Harvey said he was glad to sell his business and for \$3,500, Norm bought the grain elevator. It was sometime later that Norm also purchased the warehouse from Bartels.

Norm Smith operated it for 17 years before selling it to Mitch Wengiel (Owner of McNeely's Drug Store) and son. The last operator of the mill closed the operation in 1974. The building was demolished in 1978.

Norm Smith remembers the flag pole on the top of the Grain Elevator. His dad would climb up the pole and attach the flag onto the pole everyday.

Barbers offered hair cuts for \$.25 and were spaced thru out the village. McVey's shop was nestled between the KP Hall and the Bank building. Hop McVey had an assistant named Antoine Polmis who offered a free cut to any kid that wanted to have their hair cut. Unfortunately for them the free hair cut was a total shave of the head so you had to be wary of anything offered for free.

Hops shop was originally the Laun Brother's Company Office. It was moved across the street when Laun Brothers built their new store and office; HG rented the barbershop to Hop for \$10 per month. Hop sold his business to Frank Flaherty and opened a new business in Crivitz, but was killed in a car accident while commuting to work. [Hank Laun](#)



Laun Dynamite Shack



Thomas Produce Company - Potato Warehouses



Wausauke Town Hall



Flat Iron Building



Division Street Bridge

On the south end of the Tracy Farm was a padlocked shed made of wood and covered with tin that was owned by Laun Hardware Co and was used to store dynamite. For safety purposes it had to be located one

mile from the the town limits. "When we hunted squirrels to the west in a stand of virgin hardwood known as "Jack Forst's woods", we always took some shots with our 22's at the dynamite shed as we went by, never understanding the implications" [hank laun](#)

Dynamite was used extensively to remove the stumps from the saw mills clear cut land to create crop farms that were sold to immigrants migrating into our area. Cutover Country is a book depicting that era and the hardships that the farmers had to endure.

South of the Grain Elevator were the Thomas Produce Co. Potato Warehouses that stored all the farmers harvested potatoes until they could be sold.

The Town hall/fire station was the lot north of the Variety Store and the fire engine was located in the building to the rear of the property. Both buildings were demolished to create a parking lot to accommodate parking when the Highway 141 project forces all parking off the highway. Initially a bell was rung from the tower of the town hall, but this changed during W.W.II when a siren was installed to alarm the citizens if an enemy air raid on the village was imminent. This siren was used to summon volunteers to fight fires. Mrs. W at the Variety Store rang the siren every noon so everyone knew it was operable; it also helped the locals set their clocks.

The Flat Iron building was named for the shape of the lot where Church Street and First Street form an angle where they meet. There were three units in this apartment building owned by HG and painted in the standard Laun colors of light gray. Mrs. Rickaby, who cleaned and helped my grandmother Laun, lived in the one upstairs unit with her son, Basil. There was no running water so buckets were filled at the downstairs pump and carried up; Bathroom facilities were an outside two-holer. On the other hand, rent was only \$6 per month. This building was used for apartments, photo studio and museum. [hank laun](#)

In 2009 the building was renovated, modernized and returned to apartments.

1924 Division Street Bridge over the Wausaukee River. [Peshtigo Times Article](#)

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