

Piercefield museum is getting an update under ne

by Mary Peryea

Nancy Boeye is a retired teacher, but as of January 1st of this year, she is also the Town Historian for the Town of Piercefield. It's a job she's putting her heart and soul into.

Many people aren't even aware that there is a museum in Piercefield. It's located upstairs in the town hall on Waller Street.

For the past six months, Mrs. Boeye has been busy cleaning, cataloging, organizing, copying and preserving the artifacts and photos the museum contains.

The museum is a treasure trove of items related to the history of the Town of Piercefield and its communities, including Childwold, Gale, Conifer and Mt. Arab. Also included are items from the Legion Camp, Horseshoe Lake, Lows Lake and the Boy Scout camp at Massawepie.

The museum is a large room that was a classroom in the former Piercefield School, which closed in 1968. It contains artifacts from the school, of course, including desks and textbooks.

Displayed on the walls and in glass-fronted cupboards are artifacts from the once-thriving communities that make up the



Remnants of town's heyday

A glass case holds china and silverware from the Childwold Hotel and the Nomis Club.

Town of Piercefield—from the hotels, public buildings, boarding houses, churches, railroad stations and mills that formed the backbone of the communities.

Anyone at all familiar with the history of Piercefield knows that paper mills caused its boom. When the paper company closed in 1933, the town withered.

"It's amazing to me," Mrs. Boeye said. "It was here, then it was gone!"

Mrs. Boeye takes her job seriously. She enrolled in an online course in the preservation of documents and photographs and took a workshop on how to operate

a museum. She has a small annual budget from the town. The town also allocated extra money to allow her to purchase archival supplies and to copy photos. As well, the town's highway department assists with maintenance and repairs to the museum. Councilwoman Carol Fuller helped Mrs. Boeye to clean the premises.

Boonie Carmichael donated the museum's computer and printer. It is connected to the fiber optic network that now runs through Piercefield.

Mrs. Boeye is conducting a "donor days" campaign from June 15 through July 15. She would like anything that pertains to

the Town of Piercefield and its communities. Also, any families or individuals that have donated items to the museum are asked to come and identify them. Old photos can be brought in; Mrs. Boeye will scan them and return the originals. She is particularly interested in items related to the Piercefield Fire Department and its auxiliary. "There's nothing here and it's a pivotal part of Piercefield," she said.

Mrs. Boeye said she is hoping to leave some order when her tenure as town historian is over. "I never expected to be a town historian," she told the Free Press, "but I love it! I'm having a ball!"

Mrs. Boeye is a solo operator right now and would welcome the help of volunteers to assist with typing and with expanding the hours of the museum. Anyone with a few hours to spare can call Mrs. Boeye at 554-1001 or by email at piercefieldmuseum@gmail.com.

The museum is open on Saturdays from 1-3 pm, Sundays from 12-2 pm, or by appointment. Anyone with an interest in local history should make a point of visiting—it will be worth your while!



New face

Nancy Boeye is wo photos at the Pierce

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