



### ***From Pat's Desk...***

Can you believe the end of the year is almost here? Time sure flies by!! As 2024 comes to a close, it's tradition to reflect back on the past memories with the Oldtimers. We were able to enjoy a year at the awesome Bucyrus Club with Ernie at Skyline Catering serving us delicious food. We had many interesting speakers at our luncheons. We especially enjoyed the "free lunch" at our June picnic while serving the community with donating items or cash to the So. Milw. Human Concerns (and yes, we'll be doing that again in 2025). We had so much fun at the Sept. luncheon with a visit from SM's Sam the Sasquatch and playing "BINGO"! And of course we shared good times at our special events such as the golf outing (BOGIE), the Fireside's performance of "Miracle on 34th Street" and our Christmas party.

In 2025 we will be fortunate again to have these same get-togethers with old and possibly new friends. We have planned interesting guest speakers for our luncheons. (See page 5 for the line-up). We have also scheduled the golf outing (BOGIE) for June 5th, along with Fireside's "A Wonderful Life" on November 14th and our Christmas Party on December 11th. Please consider joining some or all of our luncheons and events. As always, it will be a fun-filled time...and of course there will again be Door Prizes at every event!!

In closing, here's wishing you a cheerful present, a well-remembered past and a prosperous and healthy year ahead! Happy Holidays and Many Blessings to you and your family in 2025!

'Til Next time,

*Pat Merkovich*

**Contact info:**

Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA  
 Attention: Pat  
 P.O. Box 563, Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564  
 or oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com

### **JOIN US FOR OUR LUNCHEONS & EVENTS**

Reservations are greatly appreciated. Call or text Pat Merkovich at (414) 617-2796, Cindy Nettles (414) 254-7923 or email oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com preferably by the Sunday before the luncheon.



1919 12th Avenue  
 South Milwaukee

This will enable us to accommodate all our members and guests.

Refreshments starting at 11:30 a.m. and Food will be served at 12:00 noon (**\$15.00/person - cash or checks only**)

All luncheons are sit-down meals.



#### **SAVE OUR LUNCHEON DATES:**

January 30, February 27, March 27, April 24  
 May 29, June 26 (Picnic), September 25, October 30

#### **EVENTS:**

BOGIE - June 5, 2025  
 Fireside's "A Wonderful Life" - November 14, 2025  
 Christmas Party/Dinner Dance - December 11, 2025

We always welcome anything from a short note to tell us how you are doing to a Bucyrus® story that you would like to share in a future newsletter. And the Association is still seeking the help of a member or group of members who would be willing to take on the responsibility of publishing the newsletter. Please contact us if you are interested or need more information.



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# SEPTEMBER 26TH LUNCHEON

Everyone had a great time at the Old-timers September 26th luncheon! From 2 “free lunch” Door Prizes, Sam the Sasquatch visiting members and friends (posing with him of course), winning 2 Sam Fan T-Shirts and playing Bingo with prizes for the winners! Yes, the September luncheon was not only a huge success but it was so much fun!!

Our luncheon Door Prize Winners for a “free lunch” were Kathy Gross and Don Kanter. Sam Fan T-Shirt Winners (do-

nated by the City of South Milwaukee) were Cindy Nettles and May Thoreson. Bingo Winners of the 3 Gift Cards were Francis Gross, Carol Roth, and Nancy Tangen. The 2 hand towel winners were Rhonda Westmoreland and Peggy Ramm. A special “Thank You” shout out goes to Christine Basta who donated the two beautiful towels that she created by hand embroidering a Bucyrus shovel on it. (Such talent!!)

This month’s menu consisted of a

choice of two soups—Chicken Dumpling or Sweet & Sour Beef Beef Borscht, a Stuffed Pork Chop, Baby Red Potatoes and Green Beans. A Big “Thank You” shout out goes to those who provided us with desserts—Mike Thompson (a marble 1/2 sheet cake), Joan Lindstrom (2 Apple Pies), Pat Merkovich (homemade Chocolate Chip Cookies, Peanut Butter Cookies & Sugar Cookies) and a tray of Brownies purchased with money donated by members to the dessert fund.



Kathy Gross - Door Prize Winner



Don Kanter - Door Prize Winner



Francis Gross - Bingo Winner



Carol Roth - Bingo Winner



Nancy Tangen - Bingo Winner



Rhonda Westmoreland - Bingo Winner



Peggy Ramm - Bingo Winner





# OCTOBER 31ST LUNCHEON

This being our last luncheon in 2024, we had a very interesting speaker for our October 31st luncheon—Ben Tyjeski, co-author of Carl Bergmans and the Continental Faience & Tile Co. which is about one of South Milwaukee's forever-gone but not forgotten company at 909 Menomonee Avenue. In it's hay-day, the Continental Faience & Tile Company was very famous globally for creating unique and beautiful decorative tiles. Ben had a wonderful display of several tiles that he was fortunate to obtain through the years. In his powerpoint presentation, he had several photos of private homes (some of them in South Milwaukee), schools and other public places who still have these tiles on the floors, fireplaces, stairways, hallways and bathrooms. Ben stated that the old South

Milwaukee Junior High which no longer exists was one example of a building that had these tiles. The Continental Faience building eventually came to an end when it was demolished in 2008. Many "Thanks" goes to Ben for sharing his vast knowledge with us about one of South Milwaukee's historical companies.

Our luncheon Door Prize Winners for the "free lunch" this month were Jan Haag and Judie Parworth. Getting into the spirit of Halloween, we had a couple people who "dressed-up" with themed attire. The entrance table and dessert tables were also decorated in scary (or maybe not-so-scary) skulls, witch hats, skeleton bones, etc to make things a little festive. Our menu consisted of Turkey and Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Corn and Cranberries along with two choices of soup—Chicken Dumpling and Split Pea with Ham. Dessert donations were made by Debbie Polzin (a Pineapple cake and a German Chocolate Cake),

Cindy Nettles (assorted Cookies), Judie Parworth (a Chocolate Cherry Cake) and Pat Merkovich (Rice Krispie Treats, Halloween Dirt Cups— a/k/a Cheesecake Pudding along with with crushed Oreo Cookie "dirt" and Trick or Treat Candy at the entrance table). Thank you ladies. As always, our meal wouldn't be complete without the help of the dessert donations.

Our 2025 schedule of luncheons is on page 1—check it out and mark your calendars. We appreciate reservations made in advance—call or text Pat Merkovich (414) 617-2796, Cindy Nettles (414) 254-7923 or email oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com. Because we give a "count" to the caterer the Monday before our luncheons, please note, the number we give them at that time is the number we pay for whether that many people attend or not. So it is much appreciated if for some reason you can't make it, please let us know.



Original tile from Continental Faience & Tile Co's walls



Ben Tyjeski - Guest Speaker



Jan Haag - Door Prize Winner



Judie Parworth - Door Prize Winner



Flooring from SM Junior High



Ben's Tile Display



Pat, Mark & May dressed in the Halloween Spirit

## HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR MAILING ADDRESS... OR YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS?



If you have moved to a new address or changed your email address and still want to continue receiving the quarterly Alumni Newsletter, please let us know by contacting Ken at [bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org](mailto:bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org) or Pat at [oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com). No computer?

No problem...you can write us at Bucyrus Oldtimers Association, P.O. Box 563, Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564. We would hate for you to miss a single issue!





After graduating from Waukesha High School in 1966, my dad suggested I apply for an apprenticeship at Bucyrus-Erie. He was the Fireman in the Heat Treat & Cleaning Room, just north of Rawson and I figured I could car pool with him. We lived near Dousman and Eagle which was a one-hour drive each way. I was one of 15 candidates for the 2-year apprenticeship which included college night courses. The first day was an experience, meeting other candidates and B-E's President, Gene Berg.

The apprenticeship was broken up into 9-week rotations in both the mining (MMD) and construction machinery divisions (CMD). Gene Zwolinski was the apprenticeship coordinator at that time. Each department was a great experience, we learned things not taught in high school. I leaned more toward the construction equipment division located in the old Dorman Shoe building which had hydronic heat that caused the heating pipes to bang loudly as the hot water would start flowing.

CMD consisted of backhoes, cranes, marine cranes, front end loaders and many more which I do not remember. After my apprenticeship, I settled down into the construction machine power plant section with Joe Plevak as the Project Engineer and Ted Pulles as my Supervisor. Since the Dorman Building was a few blocks from the main campus, we had a runner to take the revised drawings to the microfiche department twice daily.

My recollection of the Bucyrus Club was great. The 2nd floor had a basket-

ball court, stage, showers, and locker room. The 1st floor consisted of a lunch room, executive dining room, TV room, pool and billiard table room, and bowling lanes. No bar was there at the time. Lunches were great and at a reasonable cost.

The CMD, also had a Test Center in Demming, New Mexico which consisted of a small building, garage, and several acres of just bare land. My boss and I drove a U-Haul truck there filled with spare parts for a 30H backhoe. The ground was so hard (caliche) that the bucket teeth had to be replaced every 4 hours. I got to run the backhoe for 1 day of digging. It was here that I was introduced to real Mexican food, Road Runner birds, and rattle snakes. It was a trip I will never forget.

My life changed greatly when my dad, with a little help from my mother, decided to retire after 40 years with B-E. I was on my own at 19 and rented a room in a rooming house on Milwaukee Ave. My meals consisted of McDonalds, George Webb, Lloyd's Lunch, and the Bucyrus Club Cafeteria.

After a few years in the Dorman Building, CMD was moved to Sturtevant, WI on Hwy 11 in Racine County. This building was the "Taj Mahal" compared to the Dorman Building.

I eventually met the girl of my dreams and we married in September of 1969. On our way back from honeymooning in Tampa, Florida, we made a side trip to Zanesville, OH to see the "Big Muskie". It was not hard to find since it towered above the hills. Not sure that we were allowed to drive into the mining pit, but we did.

Several years later, The CMD was moved to Erie, PA. I had several trips to Erie on the company Lear, taking tours of the city, and looking at homes with the real estate broker. The company offered to pay for the move and provide com-



Big Muskie 4250W Spare Bucket



350H In Demming, NM Test Center

pensation toward payments. With much consideration, we decided not to make the move to Erie.

My 16 years with B-E were coming to a quick end, and jobs in 1982 were not easy to come by (Jimmy Carter era). After 9 months of being unemployed, I landed an engineering job in Menomonee Falls, WI. I had to take an engineering test and landed the job. After one year there, I moved to another engineering position in Waukesha, WI, spent 30 years there, and retired at 65.

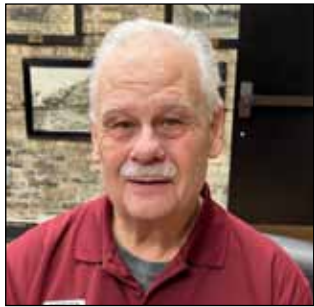
The education and experience I received from Bucyrus-Erie had set the Engineering standard for my career and life.



# Happy Birthday!

## September

## October



Gerald Miller - 77



Tom Phillips - 79



Mark Kalinowski - 80



Tim Smith - 82

## November

## December



Joan Lindstrom - 79



Joe Jankowski - 81



Don Kanter - 86



Shirley Borgie - 89

### Officers, Board of Directors and Staff

President  
To Be Determined

Dave Kieck, Vice-President  
414.840.5184

Pat Merkovich, Secretary/Treasurer  
414.617.2796

#### Board Members:

Bill Haag, Bob Jelinek, Cindy Nettles,  
Debbie Polzin, Ken Tangen

#### Newsletter:

Pat Merkovich  
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**Bucyrus Museum News Scoop:**  
Bob Jelinek

#### Webmaster:

Ken Tangen  
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www.beoldtimers.org

#### Alumni Newsletter & Correspondence

Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA  
P. O. Box 563  
Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564

## • UPCOMING LUNCHEONS •

We appreciate our Oldtimers members and friends and would like to extend our thanks by offering a “Free Lunch” on January 30, 2025 sponsored by the Bucyrus Foundation. Our June Picnic luncheon will also be “free” in lieu of a monetary donation to South Milwaukee Human Concerns that will be matched. There will be at least one other “free” lunch sometime in 2025—the date will be a SURPRISE!! So only those who attend will be lucky enough that day to enjoy a free lunch and great camaraderie with other BE Oldtimers. Mark your calendar with all the luncheon dates and plan to attend as many as you can! We’ll always have an interesting speaker or activity program at each.

**Line-up of guest speakers:** For our **January 30th** luncheon, Steve Taylor, Executive Director of the ROC Foundation and current 17th

District Milwaukee County Supervisor will be our guest speaker. He’ll discuss the upcoming Milwaukee Milkmen Baseball Club’s 7th season, and talk about new things happening in Milwaukee County.

Ernie Wunsch, owner of Skyline Catering, and our own Bob Jelinek will do a joint presentation at the **February 27th** luncheon. They will speak about the history of the Bucyrus Club building, its revival, and current growth of the many events held there every year. The museum will be free for those attending the February lunch after the speakers presentation.

For our **March 27th** luncheon it will be Kaitlin Kelly—she plans to be giving a presentation on exercise for older adults. Her education is in sports medicine, gerontology and exercise science. Watch for more information about them in our March Newsletter.

## **“Miracle on 34th Street” at the Fireside**



Oh my goodness...if you didn't join the Oldtimers for the performance of “Miracle on 34th Street” on November 22nd, you missed a wonderful dinner and performance! The story is based on the well known Christmas Movie that we have all seen several times. However, this Broadway version of “Miracle on 34th Street” had the typical storyline as the movie, but it had music that was fresh and new. It was funny, warm, tuneful and inspirational that was thoroughly enjoyed by all.



As always, upon arrival at the Fireside Theatre, we were greeted by a friendly staff member who led us to our reserved tables where we either relaxed with a special show-stopper drink such as “Elf Milk” — a mint chocolate flavored adult drink, or we shopped the unique gift shops and bakery. Once seated in the dining room we were served freshly baked warm bread from the Fireside’s Artisan Bakery along with a cup of Butternut Squash Soup, followed by a choice of four entrées: Chicken and Ribs—Fireside’s Signature Lean Pork Back Ribs glazed with their special BBQ sauce, slowly roasted until the tender meat fell off from the bone, accompanied by their Buttermilk Marinated Baked Chicken Breast; Steak Diane—Medallions of Roast Beef Tenderloin in the Classic Sauce; Or the Duck Breast—seared until crisp and blushing, sliced and served with a reduction of Port Wine and Tart Red Cherries. Each entrée was served with Roasted Garlic Whipped Potatoes and a Vegetable Medley. We ended our meal with a slice of Mississippi Mud Cake—a rich chocolate cake with pecans, topped with marshmallows and a chocolate drizzle and whipped cream...DELICIOUS!!



Once we completed our delectable meals, we were seated in the theater to enjoy the performance. The Fireside Theatre continues their 60 year tradition of bringing the finest in Christmas Entertainment. We were truly lucky to have experienced this amazing performance and to have had a wonderful day to start the Holiday



Season! Once back on the bus, the Fireside Theatre provided us each with chocolate-chocolate chip cookies...yum!! The Bucyrus Oldtimers has Door Prizes at everyone of their events, this was no exception. 4 lucky door prize winners won a loaf of an artisan bread from the Fireside Bakery (Barb Hoffa, Jo Ann Griffith, Sharon Parato and Colleen Placzkowski), Dave Greenhouse won a Jones’ Gift Box filled with meats and cheese and Dolores Page won the grand prize—2 free tickets to next year’s Fireside Performance with the Oldtimers! All in all, it was a fantastic day with good friends, old and new, great food and a fantastic musical performance!! We’d like to especially ‘Thank’ the Bucyrus Foundation for funding our transportation with USA Coach and for the fantastic Door Prizes.

Next year’s performance will be “A Wonderful Life”—**SAVE THE DATE - FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 17, 2025.** Only 56 tickets will be available. Watch for the reservation form in the Spring Newsletter. Hope you will join us!





# ❁ Oldtimers Christmas Dinner/Dance ❁



On Thursday, December 5, 2024 the Bucyrus Oldtimers Association's Annual Christmas Dinner/Dance Party was held at the Bucyrus Club & Event Center. The 2024 social event of the year was thoroughly enjoyed by Oldtimers' members and friends alike. While listening to Roger Boll, the musician who performed seasonal Christmas Music and other familiar tunes, an array of tasty appetizers were served to our hungry guests (BBQ Bourbon Meatballs, Bacon Wrapped Water Chestnuts with a Teriyaki Glaze, Veggie Egg Rolls with a dipping sauce and a Cheese & Sausage platter). The enjoyable music was followed by a fantastic meal consisting of a Bread Basket, Tossed Salad, a Baked Potato with butter and sour cream, steamed Carrots, and a main entrée choice of a Filet Mignon that was grilled to perfection along with three Shrimp, a Bourbon Glazed Chicken Breast or Salmon with a Citrus Glaze. Compliments to the Chef for the delicious food and to the waitstaff for the wonderful service! To finish off the meal, we enjoyed a variety of decadent cheesecakes and three assorted layer cakes.

This year we were very fortunate to have the Bucyrus Foundation fund the Table Favors, Appetizers, the Cookie Platters (with 9 varieties of cookies), the Desserts and Door Prizes. 18 lucky winners enjoyed a \$25.00 gift card to various restaurants and stores. And thanks to Ernie at Skyline Catering, two people won a \$25.00 gift certificate to his Skyline Deli. In addition to the Gift Cards, 3 lucky people won a Christmas Cookie Platter and this year we had a Grand Prize Runner-Up (4 free Oldtimer's luncheons in 2025, won by Jim Pettke) and a Grand Prize (a \$100.00 Visa Gift Card won by Mavis Buckland).

If you have ever hosted a party, you understand and know that much time behind-the-scenes 'prep work' takes place into making a party a huge success! With that said, a big shout out "THANK YOU" goes to Dolores Page, Debbie Polzin and Pat Merkovich who volunteered much of their time to make this event enjoyable for those attending. We would also like to "Thank" Dolores Page for donating the chips and candy placed at each dinner table and Pat Merkovich for being 'crafty' by creating the table favors (a Hershey Bar that was wrapped as Santa, Rudolph, an Elf or Snowman) and for baking the many cookies. But most of all, because of the Bucyrus Foundation, our party would not have been as extravagant. Many Thanks to the Bucyrus Foundation!! We truly appreciate it!

As in previous years, a good time was had by all! Next year's Annual Oldtimers Christmas Dinner/Dance will be held on **December 11, 2025. "SAVE THE DATE"!**



# Oldtimers Association President Dolores Page Retires



Oldtimers Association President Dolores Page has retired her position of President effective December 1st. Vice President Dave Kieck will chair the meetings until the Association elects a new President. Dolores had a long career at Bucyrus in the Parts Sales, Sales, and Service Support departments. She even returned to part time positions after her official retirement to help in several different departments at the request of those department heads.

She became a Bucyrus Oldtimers Association Board Member in 2004, and served as Vice President from 2007 until 2022, and in 2023 she was elected to President. We will still see her at luncheons and other functions, and wish her all the best in the future. Thank you, Dolores, for your support, dedication, time, leadership, and contributions over the past 20 years that have helped make every Bucyrus Oldtimers event a bit more enjoyable for all!



## SPECIAL ELECTION NOMINATIONS FOR PRESIDENT

You can self-nominate or bring forward the name of a willing member in good standing for President of the Board. Because this is a special election, in person voting will take place at our March 27, 2025 luncheon. An email will be sent to remote members who cannot attend with instructions for electronic voting.

Mail nominations before February 27th to:  
Bucyrus Oldtimers Association UA, P. O. Box 563, Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564  
or email to: [bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org](mailto:bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org) or [oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com)

(PLEASE PRINT)

I \_\_\_\_\_ would like to nominate the following person or persons for the President's position listed below:

PRESIDENT: \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to nominate myself for President: \_\_\_\_\_

I WOULD LIKE TO BE CONSIDERED FOR AN APPOINTED BOARD MEMBER

I can be contacted at: (phone) \_\_\_\_\_ (email) \_\_\_\_\_

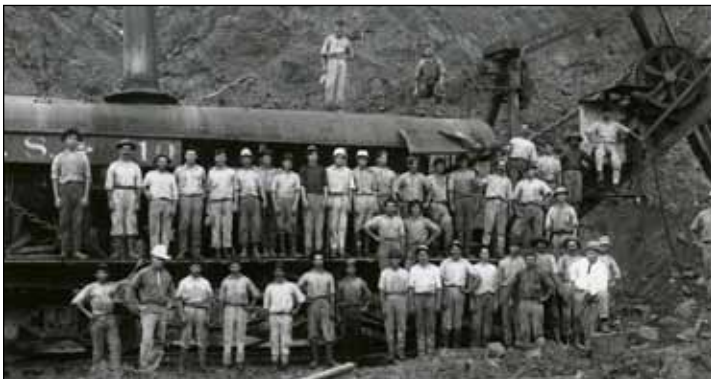




## Frank H. Sampson and His Panama Canal Legacy

Frank Sampson was a man with a thirst for adventure and innovation. Born in Milwaukee in 1885, Frank's early years were spent dreaming of mechanical wonders and adventures that stretched beyond the Lake Michigan horizon. His interests led him to Bucyrus Steam Shovel and Dredge Company who were synonymous with pioneering construction equipment. It was here that Frank's skills would be tested and honed for a historic challenge that awaited him nearly 4,000 miles away.

In early 1904, the United States embarked on an ambitious project to construct the Panama Canal—a monumental feat that would connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, revolutionizing global maritime trade. The project was daunting: a 50-mile swath of jungle, rife with disease, and plagued by natural obstacles. Bucyrus ultimately provided 75% of the heavy-duty steam powered equipment crucial for the canal's excavation. The seventy-seven steam shovels, four railroad wrecking cranes, three 15 cu/yd dredges, and one steam powered pile driver instrumental in moving the enormous quantities of earth required to forge the canal's path were all manufactured in South Milwaukee.



*Panama Canal Engineers – 1905*

*Frank Sampson top row, second from the right*

Frank, an apprentice field engineer, was tapped by Bucyrus to join the effort in Panama of assembling the new steam shovels for work on the canal. Frank brought with him a blend of grit and ingenuity typically needed for this type of work. Frank's expertise in assembling, maintaining, repairing, and operating these machines made him an invaluable asset to Bucyrus and the project.

Upon arriving in Panama in 1905, Frank instantly be-

came a very recognizable character. Tall and lean with a big mustache, he always wore full length engineer boots and a wide brim hat. He was awestruck by the sheer scale and complexity of the task at hand. The tropical heat was oppressive and the work conditions were brutal. The Isthmian Canal Commission, headed by Chief Engineer George W. Goethals, faced relentless challenges ranging from landslides to yellow fever outbreaks. Yet, Frank was determined that he could endure the rigors of such an undertaking, and help Bucyrus' machines to play a key role in the success of the project.



*Frank Sampson in Front of Bucyrus Shovel #130*

The canal project was being worked in two directions with plans to have the cuts "meet in the middle". Frank's days were spent amidst the noise of steam shovels, overburden trains, and dynamite blasts on both fronts. Each day, he would try to meticulously inspect the

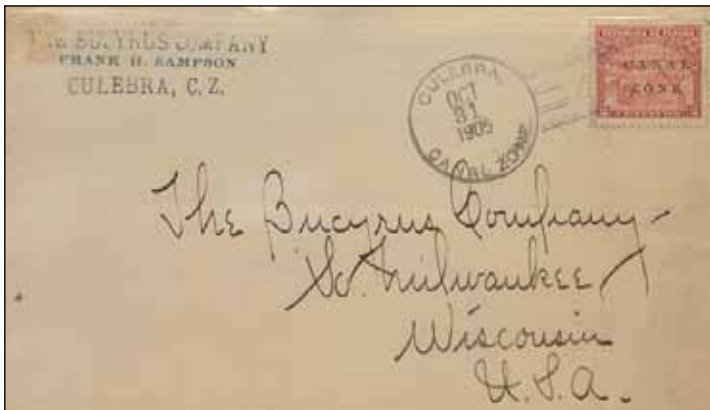


*Shovel #258 caught in a landslide on 5/29/13*



shovels, ensuring they were in optimal condition to handle the grueling workload. Of course, there were always breakdowns and regular landslides that would damage the machines. His job then became lead repair man to fix and get machines back to work as quickly as possible. His deep knowledge of the machinery allowed him to troubleshoot issues on the fly, figure out the spare parts needs, and apply a “bush fix” to minimize downtime and keep the project on track.

As time and the project went on, Frank quickly developed direct contact with the factory, filing weekly reports and requesting parts needed to repair and back up the variety of equipment Bucyrus had working. He even had his own return address stamp for correspondence, something reserved only for executives back in the day. We have an example of one of his envelopes on display in the Bucyrus Museum.



*Frank Sampson Envelope to Bucyrus 10/31/1905*

One of Frank’s notable contributions was his role in the excavation of the Culebra Cut, a crucial segment of the canal that involved slicing through the continental divide. The cut was notorious for its instability, with frequent landslides threatening to undo months of progress. Frank’s problem-solving skills were put to the test as he worked alongside a diverse team of engineers and laborers from around the world. His innovative techniques for suggesting digging patterns to stabilize the cut earned him respect and recognition among the US Government engineers leading the project.

Despite the physical and mental toll, Frank found moments of respite in the camaraderie of his fellow workers. Evenings were spent sharing stories and laughter under the starlit sky, a brief escape from the relentless demands of the project. Frank’s unwavering spirit and dedication inspired those around him, fostering a sense of unity and shared purpose.

By the end of 1913, the Panama Canal was nearing completion and Frank returned to Bucyrus. He had spent eight years on the project, and was well respected by the other teams of engineers and geologists that were

working on the project. Frank Sampson had gone from rookie field engineer to playing a pivotal role in its success. His contributions to the project extended beyond the machinery and his technical skills; they embodied the very essence of human perseverance and ingenuity.

On August 15, 1914, the Panama Canal was officially opened, marking a new era in global commerce. Frank returned for the opening and stood among the crowd of dignitaries and workers, watching with pride as the SS Ancon made its historic passage through the canal. The completion of the canal was not just a triumph of engineering; it was a testament to the collaborative efforts of individuals like Frank, whose passion and expertise had bridged oceans and reshaped the world.



*Shovels #230 and #222 “meet in the middle” of the Culebra cut on 5/20/13*

Even after he resumed his work with Bucyrus, the Panama Canal remained a defining chapter in his life. He shared his experiences with future generations, his stories rich with detail and underscored by the lessons of determination and innovation. Frank’s legacy, like the canal itself, stood as a symbol of what could be achieved when vision, skill, and tenacity converged.



*Opening of the Panama Canal - SS Ancon passing by a Bucyrus Dredge on 8/15/1914*





## 27th Annual Bucyrus Erie Picnic Fun

There was a long list of games and prizes awarded at the 1931 company picnic held at Waukesha Beach on Saturday, August 8th. The lineup included 2 softball games, an archery contest, raw egg toss, 3 bands to entertain and dance to, and 15 cash awards totaling \$100.00 to be given away.

Kids events included Turf Races, two-in-one sack races, and centipede races with 5 kids to a team. There was a sawdust scramble for kids under 12 and the prizes were pennies, peanuts, and candy kisses. Each child of an employee also received 4 ride tickets for the amusement park located near the beach.

One of the most unusual games was "Tilting"- a stationary jousting game whereby contestants stood on a platform and tried to knock their opponent off using a long pole with a semi-padded ball of rags attached to one end. Steve Galweski of South Milwaukee donated pictures to the Bucyrus Museum of his grandfather, Sylvester Lofy, in the title match, which he eventually won. The grand prize for tilting that day was a bathing suit!

Sylvester started at Bucyrus in 1916 as an 'errand boy' and went on to work as a machinist for more than 40 years. His machining career began as a shaper operator in what is now the Bucyrus Club. The West Machine Shop occupied the space that eventually became the BE Club Bowling Alleys until 1919. He was

an accomplished bowler whose 768 series record stood at the top for 16 years at the Club.

I doubt tilting would be a sanctioned company activity in current times, but was probably a blast back in the day. Sylvester's son, Richard, also worked for Bucyrus Erie in purchasing for many years. Thanks for sharing these Steve!



*Tilting Title Match*



*Sylvester Lofy*



*Sylvester, his wife Clara, and son Richard*

The South Milwaukee Industrial Museum LLC is a 501c3 educational non-profit operating the Bucyrus Museum and is dedicated to the historic preservation of documents and artifacts relating to Bucyrus International and its merged companies.

The Bucyrus Museum is located on the 2nd floor of the Bucyrus Club – 1919 12th Ave – South Milwaukee  
Regular hours are every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday from 10am – 3pm

PO Box 84 • South Milwaukee, WI 53172-0084 • 414.671.3850 • Email: [bucyrusmuseum@gmail.com](mailto:bucyrusmuseum@gmail.com)

Board of Directors: Bob Jelinek-Chairman, Gerry Miller-Treasurer, Mike McKean-Secretary, Bill Zolandz, David Austin



## "A BIG THANK YOU"

### TO OUR CONTRIBUTORS

Mike Bollis • Julia Dekker  
Gary Dillon  
Marvin Gresser  
John Hittman  
Bill Sagan  
Bill Schlecht  
Scott Streich

## *In Loving Memory*

*With Heavy Hearts we said  
"Goodbye" to:*

Gerald Gromacki - August 2, 2024  
Carlos Moser - August 25, 2024  
Kurt Boyd - August 27, 2024  
Henry "Hank" F. Kopacz - August 28, 2024  
Jack H. Rosenberg - August 28, 2024  
John N. Schommer - September 5, 2024  
Michael Crocker - September 7, 2024  
Dolores "Dolly" F. Pluta - September 14, 2024  
Joseph M Kolbas - October 1, 2024  
Marvin H. Torkelson - October 10, 2024  
Oly Porter Kochera - October 13, 2024  
Kenneth "Kenny" Robert - October 23, 2024  
Donald L. Bourgeois - October 29, 2024  
Robert F. Karcher - October 30, 2024  
Sandra "Sandy" R. Rainer - November 9, 2024  
Francesco "Frank" Bruni - November 16, 2024  
Grace M. Hedinger - November 21, 2024  
Sharyn A. Medrow - November 23, 2024  
Therne N. Scott - November 26, 2024  
Loren A. Christian - November 30, 2024

**2025**

## **LUNCHEONS & EVENTS**

**The Bucyrus Club & Event Center**  
1919 12th Avenue, South Milwaukee  
(For Reservations call or text Pat Merkovich at  
(414) 617-2796, Cindy Nettles (414) 254-7923 or  
email [oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com))

Luncheon Cost \$15.00/person (Cash or checks only)  
Opens 11:30 a.m. • Food served at 12 noon

January 30 • February 27 • March 27  
April 24 • May 29 • June 26 (Picnic)  
September 25 • October 30  
BOGIE - June 5 • Fireside - November 14  
Christmas Party - December 11

### **WE'D LOVE TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

PLEASE SUBMIT ALL  
WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE TO:  
Bucyrus® Oldtimers Association UA  
P.O. Box 563, Oak Creek, WI 53154-0564  
or Email: [bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org](mailto:bigmuskie@beoldtimers.org)  
or [oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:oldtimers.newsletter@gmail.com)