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ROTHSCHILD

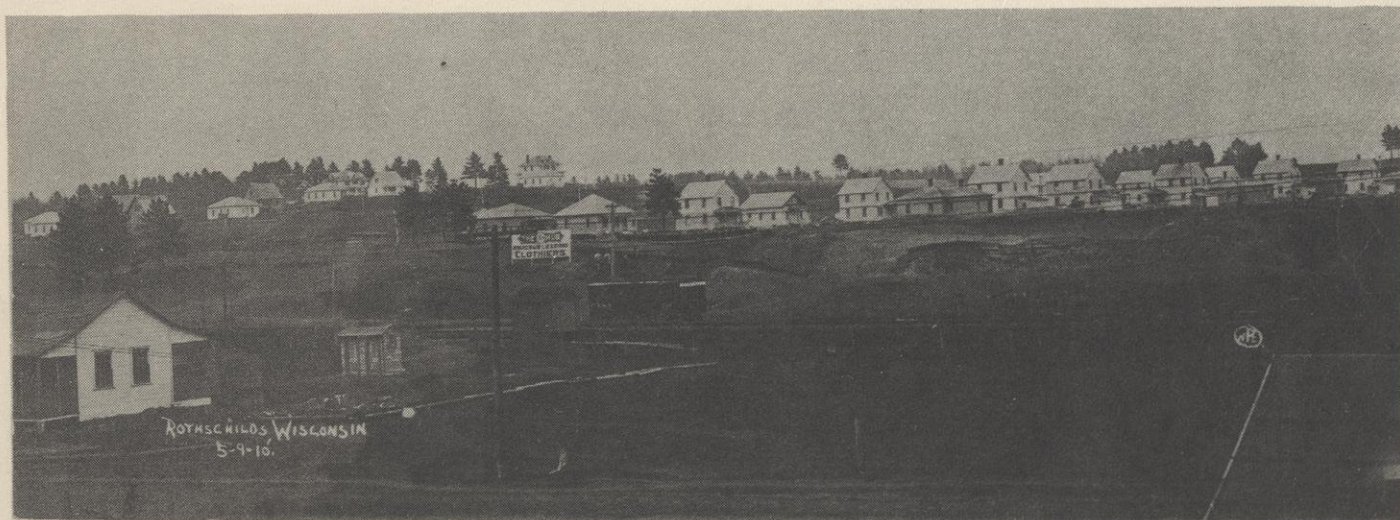
1917 -

1976



BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF ROTHSCHILDS DAM JULY 23-29 "JPG # 3"

MARATHON COUNTY
PUBLIC LIBRARY



ROTHSCHILDS WISCONSIN
5-9-16.

We wish to thank the following for their assistance in compiling the historical events for Rothschild.

"History of Marathon County" by Louis Marchetti

The Wausau Pilot

Wausau Regional Writers Anthology individuals

Also many who furnished pictures, records and valuable information, we sincerely thank.

Bicentennial Committee

Mrs. Leo Blaskowski - Chairman

Mrs. Esther Oslage

Mrs. Gary Oslage

Mrs. August Kunkel

Mrs. Arnold Urban

Mr. and Mrs. Leo Gaska

W
977.529
R746



*Birdseye View of Rothschild Dam
July 23, 1909*

ROTHSCHILD

The birth of Rothschild was directly linked with the birth of Marathon Paper Mills. In 1909 a small group of Wausau lumbermen undertook the development of a paper mill on the Wisconsin River in the Town of Weston, one mile south of the Village of Schofield. This location

was chosen because it offered a favorable site for a dam and hydroelectric plant, a very desirable adjunct to a paper mill.

Land was acquired from William Hewitt, William Schmidt and others. On February 3, 1909 Marathon Paper Mills was incorporated. C.C. Yawkey was President and D.C. Everest was hired as general manager.

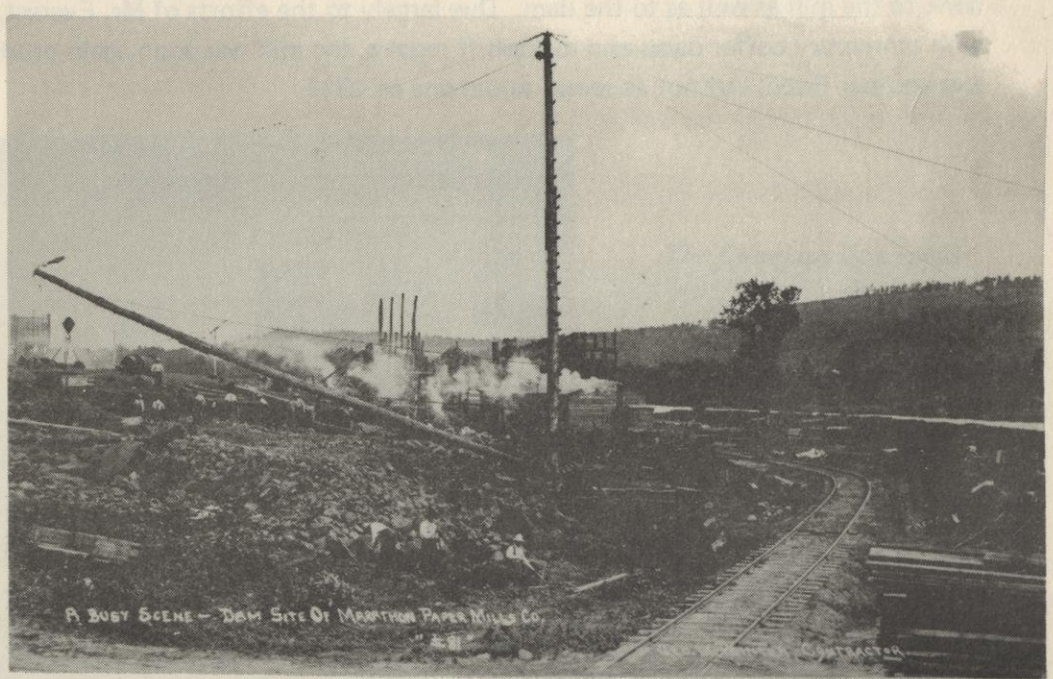
Two Chicago engineers were hired to determine footing for a dam site, found the east bank firm, but the west bank was quick sand. A quarry was set up to furnish rock for three stone crushers which were set up. The construction task was formidable because almost everything was manhandled or transported by horse carts. The only mechanized piece of equipment was a steam shovel.

3.50

Dam Site of Marathon Paper Mills Co.

B
I
N
D
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R
Y

*Heckman Binding
9-16-77*



A BOGY SCENE - DAM SITE OF MARATHON PAPER MILLS CO.



*The flood of October 7, 1911
Rothschild paper mill in rear*

Louis Davis Sr. was foreman of the hauling crew, assisted by L. Meuret, Ed Swanson and John Hanson. Ed Schmidt was tally clerk and sealer, assisted by Joe Walter. Teams hauled from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m. six days a week. The brick was bought from the Ringle Brick Co.

On November 18, 1910, Marathon Paper Mills began operation. In his annual report Mr. Everest told stock holders, the first paper rolled through without a single break and required only forty minutes.

In the fall of 1911, several dams on the upper Wisconsin River burst under prolonged and unusually heavy rainfall, and disaster struck the new mill. As the floodwaters threatened to destroy the new mill it was reluctantly decided to sacrifice the new dam to save the mill, and the west wing of the structure was dynamited thereby opening a channel to relieve flooding to the mill itself. In spite of all the effort, much damage was done to the mill as well as to the dam. Due largely to the efforts of Mr. Everest, new capital was obtained and, with temporary coffer dams and makeshift repairs, the mill was soon again producing paper. In 1912 there was another flood, but not as severe as the one of 1911.



Flood of 1941 - Rothschild Paper Mill Dam



*Company Store with its crew
and delivery wagon*

Rothschild was a part of the town of Weston until 1917 when it was incorporated as a village. Located in the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of Section 24, Township 28 North Range 7 East. In 1917 the following persons petition for the incorporation of the Village of Rothschild, Fred Palm, Walter Kersemier, M. Varo, E.F. Schmidt, Leo Abel and W.F. Hewitt.

A special notice as posted stating the following. On July 31, 1917 a meeting of the electors will be held at the store building of one Fred Palm. For the purpose of determining whether or not such territory shall be incorporated as a village. At such meeting the polls will be opened at ten a.m. and closed at four p.m.

Mr. Palm was to post this notice in the most public places. One copy was posted at Marathon Co. general store, one was posted at Kersemeier barber shop. Another copy was posted on the telephone pole main entrance road northwest corner of Louis Becker's farm. One copy on the telephone pole at intersection of east and west road and Wausau Mosinee road about 20 rods south of the Hewitt residence. One copy was posted at west end of the dam town of Fleith and one copy on the telephone pole where Mosinee road enters proposed Village of Schofield.

W.F. Hewitt, A.L. Clements and Louis Becker were appointed by the court to be the Inspectors of the election. Sixty-two ballots were cast, forty-one voted for incorporation, and twenty-one voted against. So on July 31, 1917 Rothschild became a Village. The population for the village in 1917 was 450. In 1976 the village had increased to 3,453 residents.



*The Company Store with
Richard Davis at entrance*



VILLAGE BOARD OF 1918

left to right

*Hugo Falk - clerk – Michael Varo - trustee – George Springer - trustee – Louis Becker - trustee
Ed Cook - treasurer – William Payne - trustee – George Drake - trustee – W.A. Kelly - trustee
William Hewitt - president*

W.F. Hewitt became the first village president, W.S. Whitney, clerk, and Ed Cook, treasurer. Supervisor's were W.A. Kelly, W.E. Payne, G. Springer, L. Becker, George Drake, Mike Varo, A.L. Clement. Justice of the Peace was John Kress and Otto Kamke, Constable, and Fred Laut was the Assessor.

Village officers for 1976 are President, Ardean Kort, Trustees, Gary Beier, Richard Kohlbeck, William Krajewski, Jack Olson, James Strehlow, William Thompson, Clerk-Treasurer, Vienna Eklund, Assessor, Donald Eggebrecht and Charles Geiger as Municipal Justice.

The Village board of 1917 received the following salary. President \$60.00, Clerk \$200.00, Treasurer \$175.00, Trustees \$18.00, Constable and Marshall \$102.00, and the Assessor \$50.00 per year.

To serve on the first election board were Hugo Falk, election clerk, Mr. Hewitt, George Springer and L. Becker as election inspectors. The polls opened at 9 a.m. and closed at 5:30 p.m. Polls are now open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. There are three wards with seven election workers in each ward. Warren Kinney, Mrs. Earl Pelot and Fred Vetter are the election inspectors, with the rest serving as ballot clerks and clerks of the election.



*Louis Schmidt's home
on Highway 51*

Weston Avenue was the first main street in Rothschild, with a post office, store, barber shop, boarding house, drug store and other business places. The Post Office was located in the drug store and the front window of the drug store displayed hats. Many ladies looked forward to seeing the new styles.

It was then decided that Brown Blvd. would become the main street. So some of the buildings were moved from Weston Avenue to Brown Blvd. Mrs. Bill Hewitt can remember her husband moving the barber shop on rollers with just a team of horses. Walter Kersemeier was the barber, and his haircuts cost 25 cents and you could get a shave for 15 cents. He was the village barber from 1914 to 1965. His barber shop was also used for village board meetings and elections until the village hall was built. It was known as Barber's Hall. He also served on the Village Board for many years.

Mr. Palm moved his building to Brown Blvd. also, the building is now Johnies Rothschild Bar. Mr. Palm's building was not only a butcher shop but there was an ice cream parlor and Theo Best had a bakery in this building.

The Paper Mill built a company store which later became the Rothschild's IGA and is now Jim's Superette. The Company store enforced restrictions such as: there was to be no other grocery store in the village for ten years, and Mrs. Best had to discontinue her bakery and Mr. Palm could not sell can goods in his butcher shop.

Mike Varo operated a boarding house, feeding as many as 300 at a meal. Meal tickets were \$3.50 per week for 21 meals. A sizable chunk of Mike's pie was 10 cents. Other women packed baskets with food, delivered them to the mill and charged 35 cents. Mike's boarding house is now the apartment building on Brown Blvd.

Mike Varo's home is now Reich's TV, and was the site of the second Post Office. In 1956 the present post office was built. Mrs. Philbrick was the first postmaster, Mrs Varo, Mr. Drake, Mrs. Geiger, Mrs. A. Means, Mrs. V. Means also served as postmasters. R. Engelmann is the present postmaster.



Home of second post office and first auditorium on Brown Blvd.

Most homes in the village were known as company houses. The three O'Dean brothers had the contract to construct 75 company houses. These rented as low as \$8.00 per month. These homes were heated with space heaters and the basement had dirt floors. Floors on the street level were of tamarack, splintery and hard to scrub. Every home took roomers. It was during the late 1930's that the tenants who were living in these homes had a choice of buying the homes or vacate them, many did buy.

Ben Fredrich said he can remember when the sidewalks were made of wood and snow removal was done with a caterpillar that had large timbers on the front of it. And one of the best places to go berry picking is where the grade school is now.

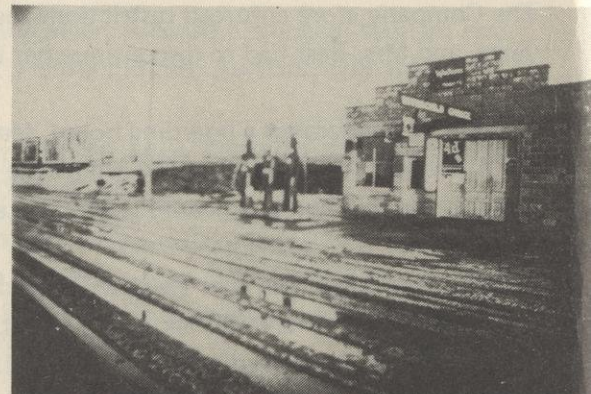
Mr. Fredrich was also the village marshal for a number of years. One of his duties was to shoot stray dogs, which he received a \$1.00 per dog. He said some times he would have as many as 200 hobo's in the jail, as Rothschild's was noted for giving them a good meal and a place to sleep.

The village did not have its own doctor, but the mill hired a nurse, Elvira Jacobson, and provided her with a Ford car to get around in. She not only helped the mill hands but the village families as well. If you needed a doctor you had to get one from Wausau. They charged \$3.00 for a house call and \$5.00 for the delivering of a baby.



William W. Hewitt grading village streets

Wm. Schmidt's gas station on Highway 10, now Highway 51. Street car tracks in the foreground





First school house in Rothschild with Mrs. Meuret-teacher and her pupils 1908

The first school was known as Joint School District No. 4, towns of Weston and Flieth (the latter known now as the Town of Rib Mountain) and Rothschild. The first school house was located south of what is now the Rothschild's Pavilion. It then was moved down on what is now So. Line Road. It was a one room school and had grades one thru eight. Some of the earlier teachers were Arden Prontow, Emma Meuret, Lulu Cayo, Elsie Mohr, Goldie Linder, Nellie Risley, and Kathryn Lerum. Mrs. Ida (Hewitt) Delisle received 40 cents a month for starting the fire in the stove, before school started each morning. She was always afraid to go in, so she would always look in the windows first, as hobo's sometimes used to sleep in.

The school board members were, Eugene Williams - director, Louis Becker - Treasurer, and E.H. Schmidt - clerk.

On June 5th 1912, a agreement was signed for building a new school. The bond was signed by Charles Hackbarth and members of the joint school district No. 4. Mr. Hackbarth was to furnish all labor and materials required for the erection of a two story and basement, brick school house, for the amount of \$7,800.00. A.H. Halder had contract for installing all plumbing and sewer work. All labor and material required for \$90.00. Another contract with Wausau Street R.R. Co. to do all the wiring for the school. The contract was for \$69.70.

On September 8, 1913 the new school opened. Eva Bernier was principal, having grades 6-7-8. Mary Abel, assistant, grades 2-5 and Miss Hattie Friedmann, Kindergarten and 1st grade. The total school budget was \$2,407.82 for the school year September 8, 1913 thru June 1, 1914, including the teachers salaries.

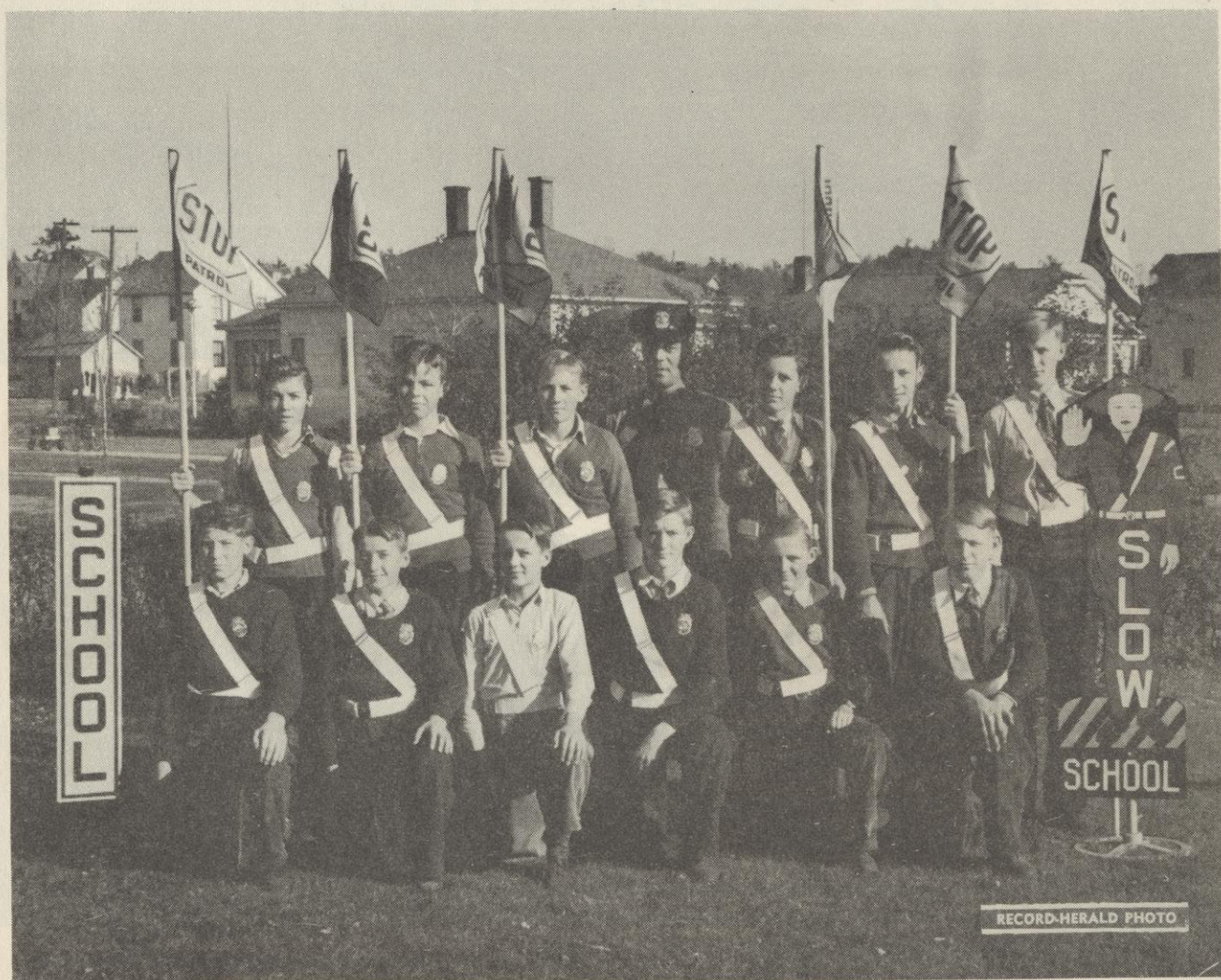
Most social activities were held in the new school house. Permission had to be personally secured from the board members. Basket socials, dancing and parties were popular.

The annual school report dated 6/30/1914 gave the names of the parent, address, distance from school, names of the children between the age of 4 and 20. Sex (not male or female) but boy or girl. Whether the child attended public school, private or parochial school.

Rothschild now belongs to Joint School District No. 1, which includes Rothschild, Schofield, and takes in parts of the towns of Ringle, Kronenwetter and Wausau, and all of Weston.

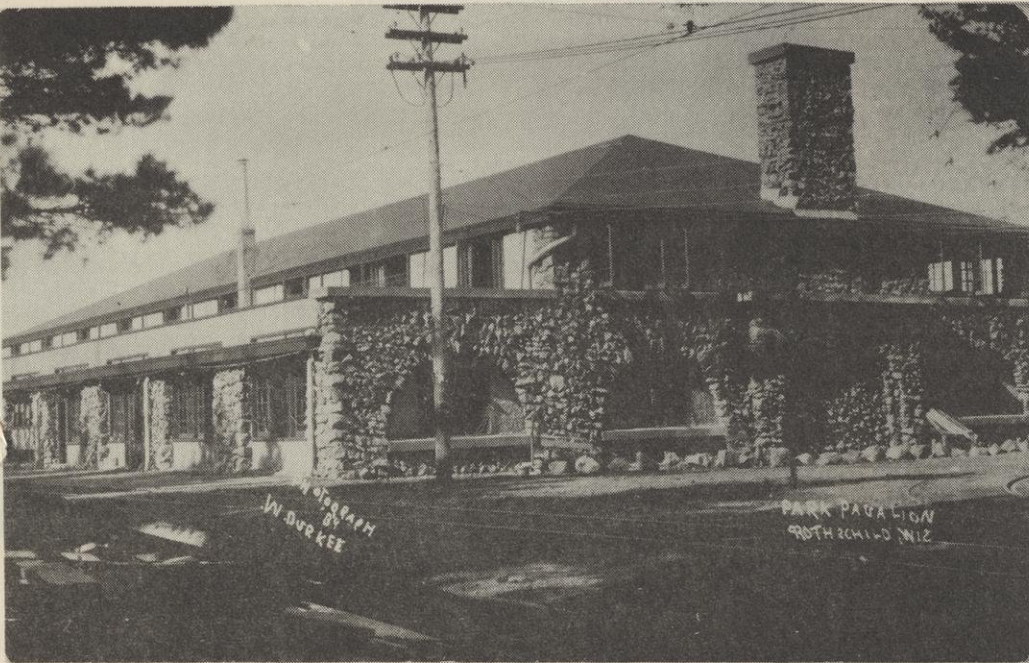
Students from Rothschild now attend the Rothschild Grade School, or St. Marks. They then go to D.C. Everest Middle School and then to the D.C. Everest High School. The middle school and high school were named after Mr. D.C. Everest, prominent local and national figure.

*The first School Safety Patrol in the Village of Rothschild
Organized by Chief of Police, Julius Becker*



*Top Row - Bob Guenther, John Gaska, Bud Urbanski, Chief Becker, Roger Kunkel, Don LaFave, Albin Bednarski
Bottom Row - Richard Bukowski, Theron Clark, Ted Bednarski, Roger Drew, Paul Pukas*

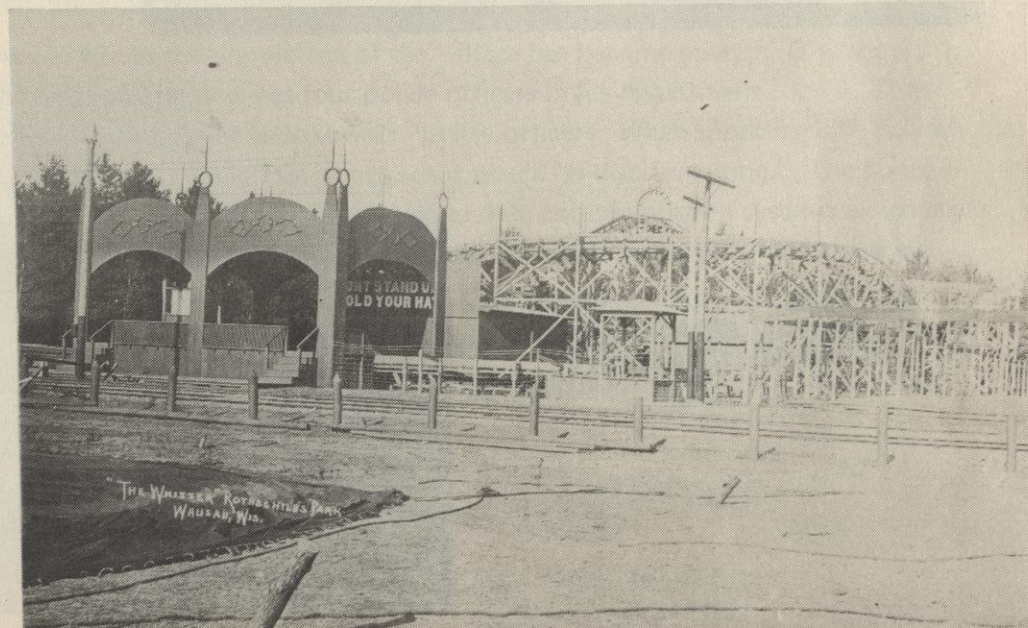
*The second Rothschild Pavilion
built in 1910*



A showplace for many years has been the Rothschild Pavilion, then known as Pine Park. It was built in 1908 of slabs with rough bark on it, and the sides were covered with burlap to keep the rain out. This building burned down in 1910, the Electric Company then built a beautiful stone pavilion with rustic furnishings. A full time caretaker was hired on salary plus a house, rent free.

It was visited winter and summer alike. A swimming pool and picnic grounds were on the island, and boats were available for rent. It also had a baseball park, ski slide, hockey rink and dances. Industrial companies gatherings were held on most of the Sundays of the month. The Rod & Gun Club was a very active group and put on many activities. Winter sports activities were held featuring a winter Sports Queen and her court. But the most popular attraction was the roller coaster, known as the whizzer.

*The Roll-a-Coaster (Whizzer)
at Rothschild Park*



Transportation was available as the street cars went from Wausau to the Pavilion and later was extended to the "Punch Office" or also known as the "Time Shack." The car fare was five cents to the Wausau City limits and ten cents to Rothschild. On weekends they also added trailers to the street cars and many times boys jumped on the trailer and they were at the pavilion before the conductor had a chance to collect the fare so the boys rode free.

Before the dam was built, young men would take long narrow boats, tie them together and the head boat had a motor and it would pull the others down the river to Mosinee, make a turn to the right, and that is where the good fishing hole was located. Sometimes they would remain overnight in an old barn and the next morning Mr. Hewitt would take his hay wagon, go down to where the boys were, load the boats on the wagon and bring them back to Rothschild with all their fish.

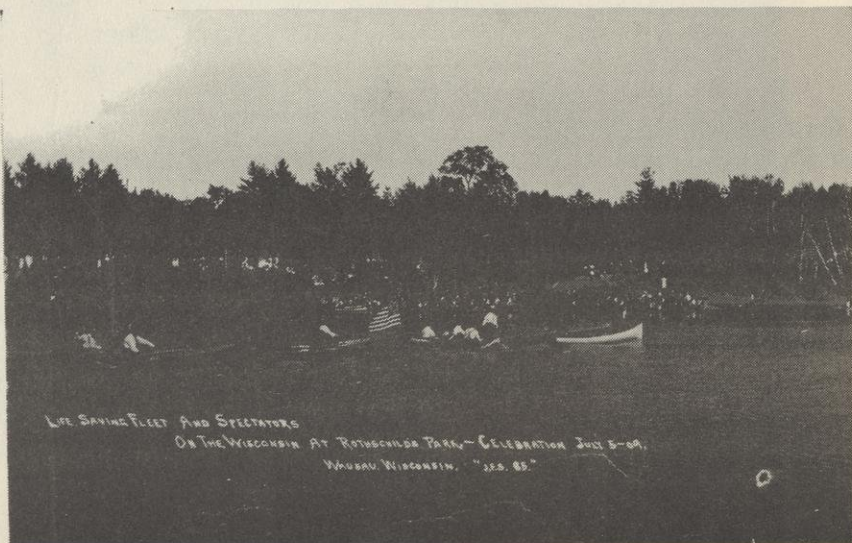


Trolley cars used by Rothschild residents to shop in stores on Third Street in Wausau



Local fisherman on their way to their favorite fishing hole

Life Saving Fleet and Spectators on the Wisconsin River at Rothschild Park celebration, July 5, 1909



Violation of Village Ordinance No. 18 was the first case to appear in Rothschild Court on June 7, 1918. Victor Salmanson was the Justice of the Peace and John Staega as the constable. The defendant was fined \$6.45 for allowing his cattle to run at large within the village limits.

First traffic violation to appear in court was speeding in the village at a speed to exceed 15 miles per hour. The defendant was going 30 miles per hour and was arrested by speed cop J.V. Shriver. Defendant was fined \$10.00.

In 1936 the village formed its first police department, until then the constable and marshal had been elected. Julius Becker was hired as the first police officer. He was born May 22, 1904 in Rothschild, where he spent most of his life. In the early 30's he served the village as constable.

He had to furnish his own car and was on call around the clock. At night if he needed an ambulance, he had to wake up a neighbor or go to the nearest tavern to call for help. No police radio at this time.

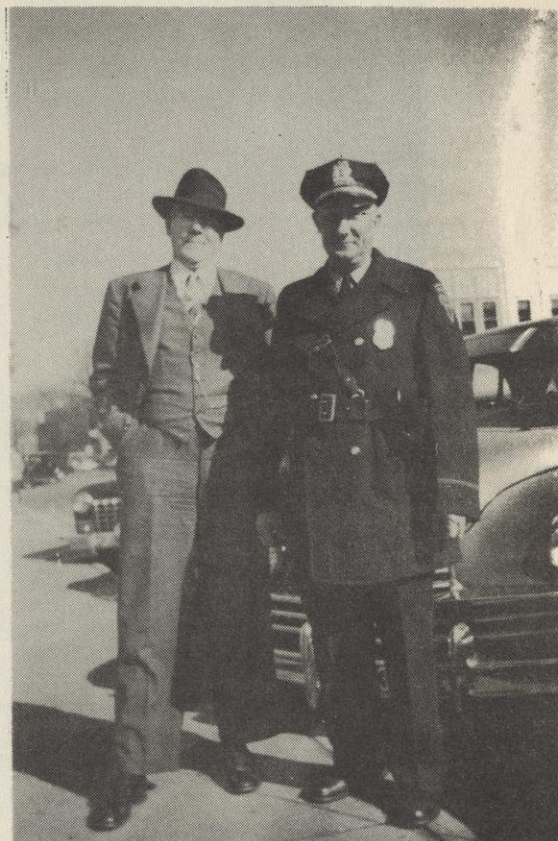
Working on a tip of a neighbor early one morning, that two strangers were going from house to house for food, he investigated. Captured two escapees from the State Prison, he then delivered them to the Sheriff's office and was asked if he didn't think it better to be a "live coward" than a dead hero.

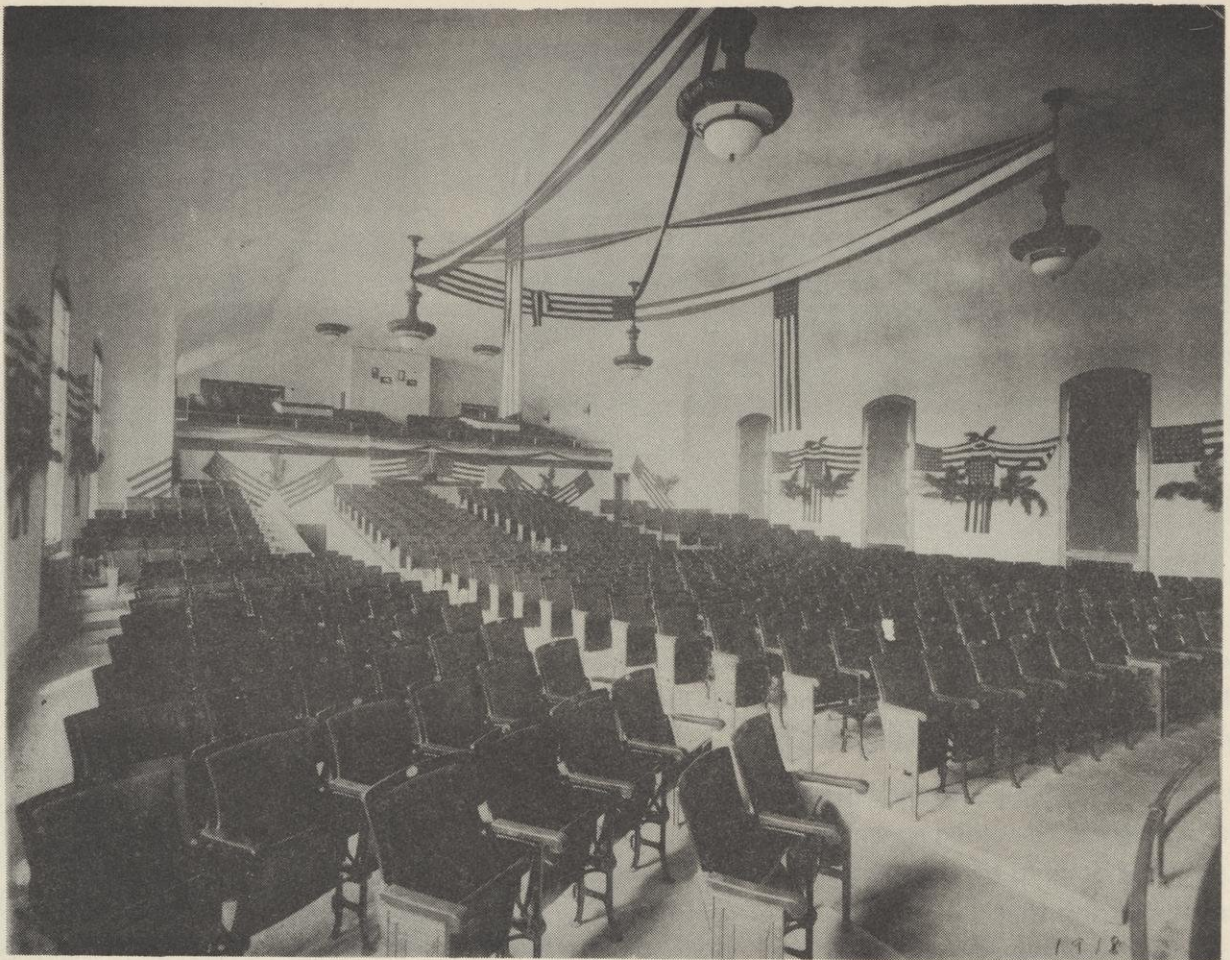
He organized the first school Safety Patrol in the village and later the Women's School Patrol.

At his retirement after almost 31 years of service, the last 16 as Chief, he had the longest record of service of any then present active chiefs in the area. In 1967 he was presented the National American Law Enforcement Award. He served as Trustee on the Village Board after his retirement. He belonged to the Quint County Law Enforcement Association and the Wisconsin Chief of Police Association. He received a lifetime radio telephone operator permit from the Federal Communications Commission in 1955.

The Police Department has grown in size as the population of the Village has become greater. On January 1, 1967 Bernard Check became police chief and he now has four police officers in his department. Joe E. Toth-Sergeant, Ronald Pospychalla, Robert Roeske, Frank Stankowski - police officers. When speaking with Police Chief Check he said "the word patrolmen could no longer be used as it would be discriminating." The police department has two vehicles with the latest radar equipment, and up to date communication systems which are used for police work as well as portable radios and CB units. Use of body armour (bullet proof vests) are also worn by the officers who are on night patrol.

There is also a special police unit of six men to be used for emergency or disasters. These men also serve as dance inspectors. The Village of Rothschild was the first police department in Marathon County to use radar equipment in its village.





Inside rear view of auditorium with balcony

One of the greatest losses to the Village was the beautiful Village Hall, which was destroyed by fire. Built and furnished at a cost of \$93.00 in 1918. It contained a fire station, three jail cells, bowling alley, restaurant, a three room fireside meeting complex, two motion picture machines, library and an auditorium. The auditorium was equipped with theater seats, a stage where the Little Theater performed (characters were Rothschild residents). There was a balcony equipped with the same type of seats until the school became overcrowded. It then was partitioned off for school rooms.

Mr. and Mrs. George Spatz had the first private wedding dance in the auditorium on June 8, 1920.

Some of the organizations that held their meetings and socials there were, Rod & Gun Club, 4-H, Homemakers, Garden Club, Legion & Legion Auxiliary, Brownies, Girl & Boy Scouts, and the Village Board.

It was also used for church services, school, Sunday school, wedding, showers, elections, canteen, basketball, square dancing, plays, movies (picture shows) and Halloween parties.

The village hired a couple as caretaker for a salary of \$2,500.00, later they just had a custodian. The outside had the Blue Star Memorial which the Garden Club maintains.





ROTHSCHILD HOMEMAKERS

Left to right - front row:

*Eleanor Kundel - Elna Achterberg - Helen Kowalchuk
Emma Little - Mrs. Hintz - Hazel Martin - Mrs. Lake -
Mrs. McDonald - Ethel Prive - Ella Bessey - Mrs. Her-
man Erickson - Mrs. Louis Becker - Pauline Tesch*

Left to right - rear row:

*Laura Berard - Janet Akey - Gusta Felch - Adeline Hintz -
Barbara Lyon - Esther Oslage - Mrs. Elmer Drews - Isabelle
Juedes*

Mrs. John Bard and Kay Biwer and the Rothschild Homemakers were instrumental in procuring a library in the village of Rothschild. Until then the village paid the city of Wausau \$75.00 a year for library privileges. The library started in April 1949, and was located in a small room on the first floor of the village hall, later when space became inadequate they moved the library upstairs. Rothschild Homemakers helped sponsor it and appointed the following on the library board, Mrs. August Knukel, Mrs. Hilbert Tesch, and Mrs. Henry Oslage. They still serve in this capacity along with Mrs. Arnold Urban and Mrs. Myrtle Davis. All the time and work to prepare the room and the hours of service were donated. The library was opened two days a week, two hours a day. At present the library has a spacious room in the new village hall and is a branch of the Marathon County Public Library. It is now open four days a week, Monday through Thursday from 2 - 8. There is about 850 families registered and it has a story hour for 3 - 5 year olds. The Library not only has general reading material for both children and adults, but also audio visual and reference material.

On June 28, 1970, Rothschild dedicated its new village hall. The new village hall has an auditorium, library, kitchen, meeting room, board room, village clerk's office and the police department.



Back row - left to right

Elna Achterberg, Barbara Lyon, Esther Oslage, Ruth Martin, Ruth Jagler, Mrs. Erickson, Gusta Felch, Myrtle Davis, Martha Kersmeier, Florence Spinder

Second row

Ann Hunt, Mrs. Adolph Hintz, Mrs. Elmer Drews, Ann Babl, Marian Urban, Isabelle Juedes, Emma Randreys, Pauline Tesch

The Fire Department with first fire truck



Fire drill – 1914 – first fire equipment - cart with hose

Rothschild Fire Department was organized in the early 1900's. It not only served the local community, but the surrounding area. There were 15 men on the department. First fire equipment consisted of a cart on wheels, which carried a hose. The men would push or pull it to the closest hydrant near the fire and then hook up the hose. Later a Model T Ford truck was purchased, it had one 50 gallon tank and 100 feet of hose. License for the fire truck cost \$15.00.

W.E. Payne was the first fire chief. An article appeared in the local Marathon Runner which went as follows: It is seldom that a fire chief condescends to do the actual work at a fire, but Bill Payne is a different kind of a fire chief. You should have seen him acting at the time of the fire in his cellar. It was a pleasure to see him drag the cart all alone. Here is one time that Bill did not wait to put on his hat. The fire was caused by the burning of a lot of paper which Bill had piled on top of the furnace, the paper went up in smoke. We claim this is a worse offense than the putting of ashes in a wooden box.

In 1944 first aid was instituted in the fire department. Lawrence Pflieger was the first aid instructor. Harvey Kamke served on the fire department for over twenty-seven years, many of them as fire chief.

The present fire department has 22 men, 2 fire trucks, a panel truck, ambulance and a fire station. Cal Bennett is fire chief, assistant chief, Milton Hamann, Neal Clark is captain and Floyd Braatz, Gary Oslage, William Schuster, lieutenant's.

There are several stories of how Rothschild got its name. The most commonly heard story is, there was a transient traveler reportedly living in a cave on the north end of the Clark farm overlooking Cedar Creek that still flows across the highway on the south edge of the village, lingered in the area. He was a reticent man carrying himself with grace and assurance. His hermit existence was a puzzle to all. Bill Hewitt, who carried the mail regularly up from the Point, recalls leaving a letter for the man one day. Shortly afterwards the hermit left as silently as he had come. Rumor had it he was of the great French house of Rothschild and was so called. No-one knows how long he sojourned there nor where he went, but the name was good, the mystery intriguing so the name was applied to the little settlement.

Rothschild did not have a church in its community until the late 1940's. Until then the villagers were served by visiting missionaries and surrounding clergymen, and also went to churches in Weston and Wausau.

St. Therese was known as "Our church in the Pines", and was the first church in the village. In December, 1937 the parish was legally incorporated in the State of Wisconsin. Until the church was finished, mass was said in the village hall and Schofield School. On May 15, 1949 the corner stone was laid and on December 18, 1949 mass was held for the first time in the completed church. Dedication of St. Therese of the Child Jesus was on October 8, 1950 by the bishop John Treacey D.D., Ordinery of LaCrosse. Monsignor T. E. O'Shaughnessy, pastor of St. James Parish preached the sermon.

Highland United Methodist Church as formally organized on June 19, 1956. The first pastor was Reverend Milton Weishaar. Ground was broken for the church, and on March 2, 1957 the church was dedicated.

Mt. Calvary was organized on April 29, 1956 when 62 people registered showing their interest in starting a mission church in Rothschild. A site was purchased and the Rev. James Ullom was the first minister. Until the church was finished Sunday School and church services were held in an unused school house in the town of Weston. On May 19, 1957 ground was broken and on August 11, 1957 the cornerstone was laid.

The local youth in formal attire for an outside picnic





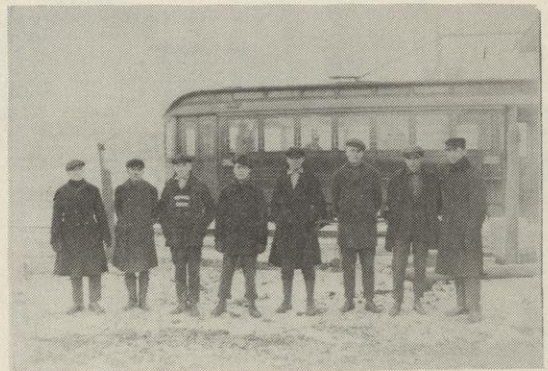
Working girls at Marathon Paper Mill



Duck hunters with their hunting gear



Rothschild's Baseball Team



Paper mill workers in early 1900's

T.28N. R.7E.

1919-?

