



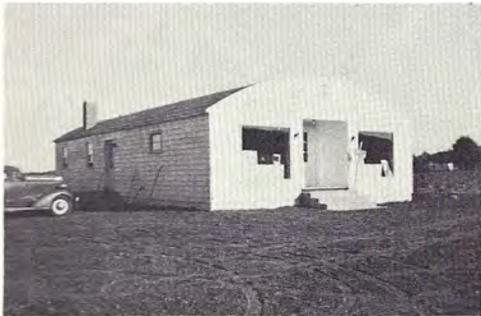
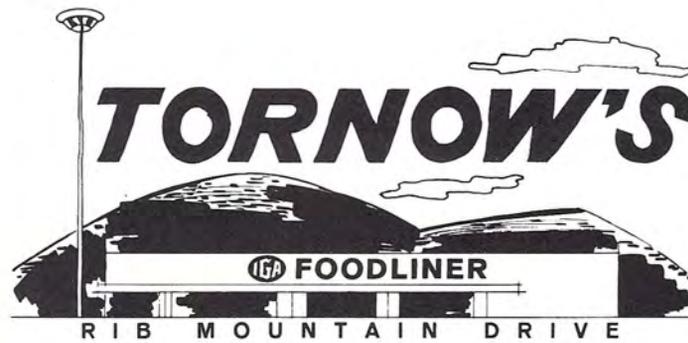
RIB MOUNTAINEER



photo by Dee Schofield

The Mountain and a Township

*28 years of progress
serving Rib Mountain Area!*



1947



1953



1959



1975

*Growing Progressively with the wonderful
Rib Mountain Area!*

RIB MOUNTAIN

The Mountain and a Township

We would like to express our thanks to the following for their cooperation in gathering this record of historical events for Rib Mountain and the surrounding area.

"History of Marathon County" by Judge Louis Marchetti

Marathon County Historical Society

The Wausau Record Herald

The Wausau Pilot

University of Wisconsin – Marathon County Campus

Wausau Public Library

In addition to the above, many residents furnished pictures, records and valuable information for which we are most grateful and wish to express our sincere thanks.

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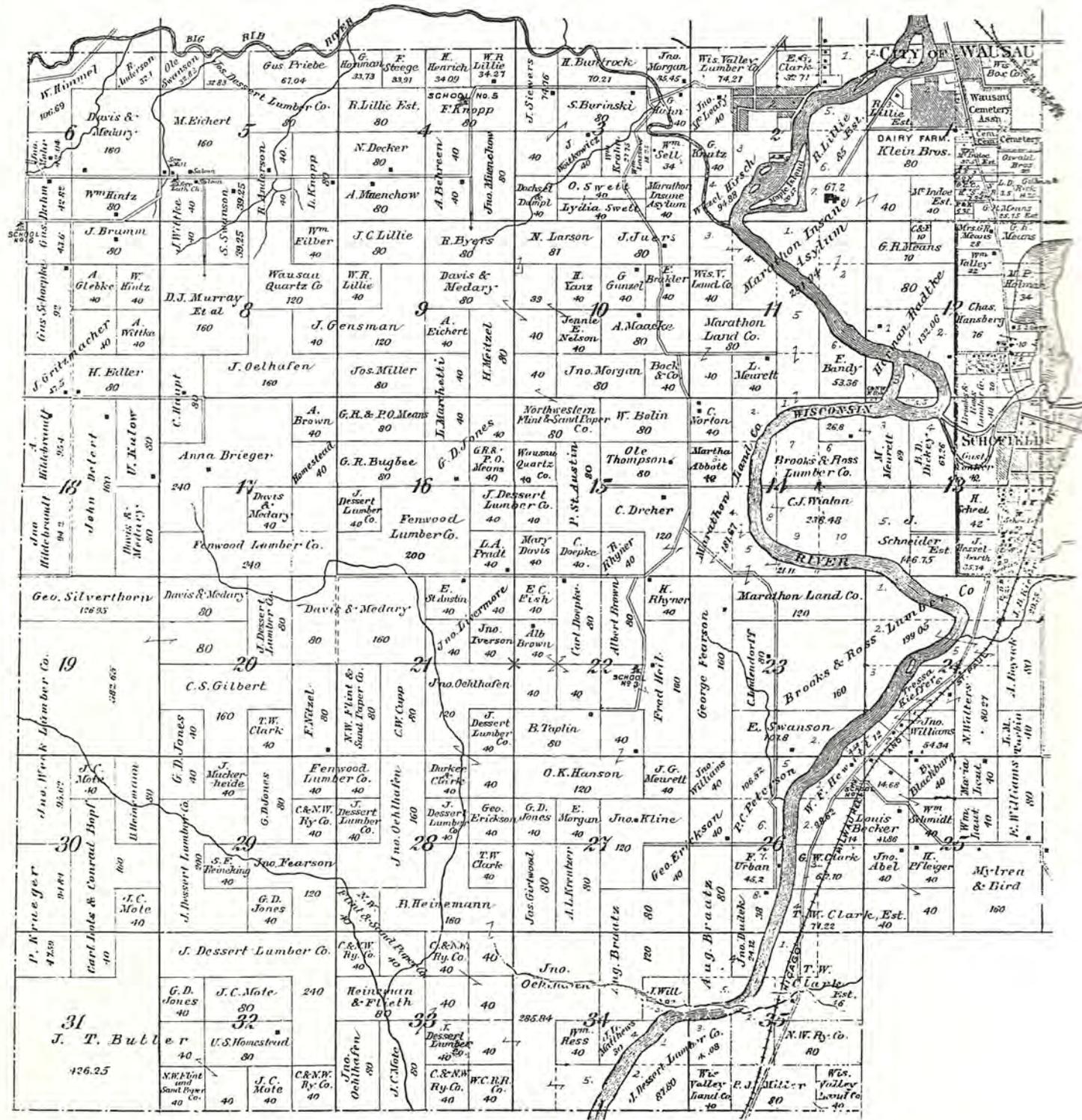
Stewart Doty



TOWNSHIP 28 NORTH RANGE 7 EAST

Scale 2 Inches to the Mile

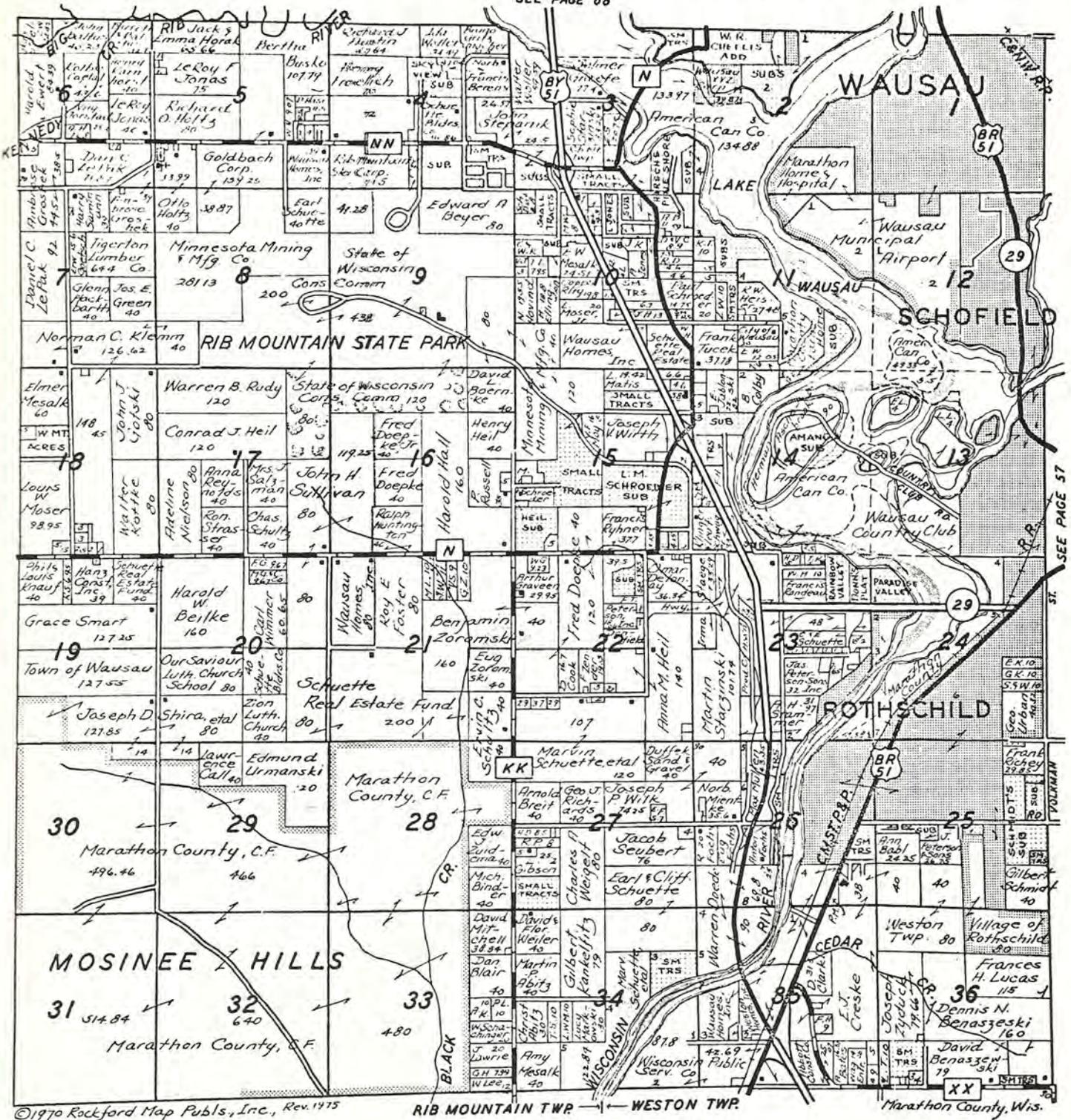
of the 4th Principal Meridian.



RIB MOUNTAIN WEST PART

T. 28 N.-R.7 E.

SEE PAGE 68



©1970 Rockford Map Publs., Inc., Rev. 1975

RIB MOUNTAIN TWP WESTON TWP

Marathon County, Wis.



The Origin of Rib Mountain:

A Quartzite Monadnock

Millions of people have seen Rib Mountain through the years (how could you miss it?) and were impressed by the sight -- a monadnock rising 1,940 feet above sea level and averaging 650 feet above the surrounding area.

How did Rib Mountain, possibly part of a rock mass including the Mosinee Hills and Hardwood Hill but considerably larger and higher, originate?

This is what geologists tell us.

It was once part of a mountain range that covered most of Wisconsin. Through alternate processes of heat and cold, wind and rain, most of the land was leveled to a plain. Then the state of Wisconsin was submerged beneath the sea. Rivers draining into the sea deposited sand and clay which later became sandstone and shale, respectively. Limestone deposits were formed over a period of several hundred million years from animals and plants living in the sea.

The sandstone, shale and limestone were eventually removed by stream flow to the south.

After the area that is now Wisconsin rose from the water, glaciers came down and covered it until about 6-9,000 years ago. Four separate glacial advances were made into the state, the fourth covering Rib Mountain. One would think that all those forces would have reduced it to a flat sur-

face. However, its hard quartzite formation kept it from crumbling, and we see it now surrounded by rolling hills that were molded by glacial deposits.

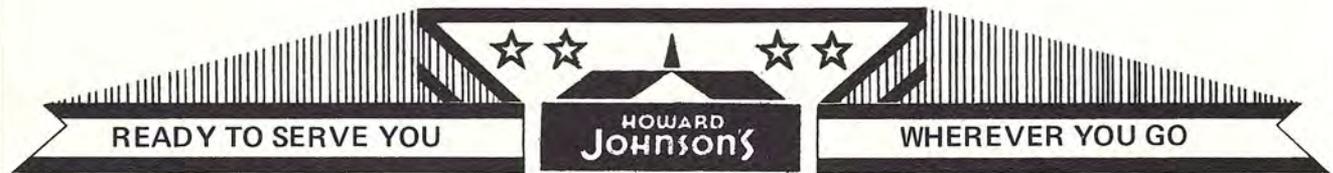
The Wisconsin and Rib rivers were also formed by the movement of the glaciers. There is evidence that the Wisconsin River was a mile wide in the city of Wausau. The flat area in the central portion surrounded by hills is an indication of this. These hills extended into Schofield and Rothschild, so one can just about determine the width of the river in that area also, and the course it took.

Rib Mountain and the Mosinee and Hardwood hills might possibly have been shorelines along which the river flowed. As with the narrowing of the river bed, there were also changes on the surface of the mountain range. Much of the surface was pulverized by the elements into soil that made possible the growth of trees -- pine, maple, white birch, oaks and basswoods.

After the discovery of Rib Mountain, because of its superior size, it became the best known of the remnant hills.

A geological description of the mountain follows:

It is a Huronian quartzite monadnock on a pre-Cambrian penepain which is



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in the old-age stage of erosional development.

It is approximately four and one-half miles long and 1.6 miles wide at its widest portion. It covers an area of approximately three to three and one-half square miles.

It is slightly arc-like in form which has been likened to a human rib.

Its surface material consists of bed-rock exposures at the summit. On the north and south slopes near the summit, and along the park road, soils on the rocky quartzite area are usually less than one foot in depth.

The Rib Mountain quartzite is remarkably pure (99.07 per cent silica), white, vitreous and firmly cemented. Color varies from white to pale pink due to iron stain. Geologists studying the quartzite formations found indications that the quartzite was re-crystallized during the late Pre-Cambrian era.

The Pre-Cambrian era is the oldest age of existence of the earth, lasting from 4½ to 5 billion years ago to 600 million years ago. It was a time when heat inside

the earth forced volcanoes to erupt which in turn brought about many changes on the surface.

But the hardcore of Rib Mountain must have resisted even those pressures; so it stands today, a monument in almost the exact center of Marathon County and the state of Wisconsin.

A plaque beneath the Van Douser Tower, erected on top of the mountain by the Wisconsin Conservation Department in 1958, sums it up with the following words:

“Dense hard rock forming Rib Mountain is quartzite. Was originally loose sand but was changed first to sandstone by cementing of sandgrains and then to quartzite, by earth movements and fluids which compressed and hardened the rock.”

People living in the township are not only proud of the mountain, but its very existence determines the type of life style in the area. The succeeding chapters will point out the influence of the mountain upon residents of the township through the years.

RIB MOUNTAIN, WISCONSIN'S MONADNOCK

By Eleanor Pautz

Backward, billions of years ago,
Earth was without form, and void
Covered by waters on the face thereof,
Land was not yet, there was no sound, no sign from any dry place thereof,
Merely darkness and mist; then a great light shone on the face of the deep.
Light had no sound, but the sound of rain and the sea was an old gray sound
On and around and above earth.
Molten-masses of rock melted within the heart of it,
From the depths this great fury caused a mighty seism,
And the sound of the seism was a tremendous sound, a heaving sound
Amidst and around and above it.

Backward, billions of years ago,
Far up, in the high arena of the winds,
Land came forth, up through the face of the sea
Dry land, a little lower than the crags above it,
Jagged crags of white quartzite and colored granite heaved up,
And the sound of the land was a settling sound, a heavy sound,
On and about and amidst earth.

Backward, far north, in the cold arena of the Arctic,
Gigantic ice sheets and glaciers took shape at the snowline,
Ice shrouded at sea-level the great north of the earth,
Four times, each time many ages apart, ice moved southward,
Four times, the cold waters reached not the summit of Rib Mountain.
And the sound of the ice was a crashing, a thundering sound
Upon the rough land as ice circled it.

Today, many thousands of years after the last ice age,
Rib Mountain, Wisconsin's Monadnock endures, endures endlessly,
Atmospheric changes cannot ravish nor remove its strong resistance.
Since the Pre-Cambrian Era, Rib Mountain's firm foundation rests
On basal-rock strata. Bearing the marks of several sea-submersions
The summit's white crown is projecting still.
Perhaps once it towered higher than the Alps, ranged wider than the Rockies.
Now the ancient Rib has settled to a fraction of a mile in height.
Yet even today, old, old sea-green lichen clings tenaciously to white quartzite,
And even today, yellow birch and hemlock's hair-like roots bore the rock,
Seeking sustenance, slowly, slowly, augering solid rock asunder, forming soil.
Now the sound of people's voices and program broadcasts are good, great, sounds, Selah,
On and around and about all of Rib Mountain!



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The Development of Rib Mountain:

Immigrants, Lumbermen, Farmers, our predecessors

"Why, this is nothing but woods!"
(Dass iss alles blos baumann!)

The words were probably spoken in German, as many of the first people coming to the Town of Rib Mountain were German. They had purchased land "on paper" and now came to claim it. Would they stick it out?

Some of them returned to their former homes, but others stayed and struggled with the elements and the "baumann." They cut down trees and built shacks or log houses, then cut down more trees and either burned them or slid them into the Wisconsin River to float downstream to mills farther south. Men rode the logs at great peril to themselves, guiding them with cant hooks. This was called "log rolling."

Great amounts of logs were put together in the water in the shape of a ship, it was told by Frank Busko. Lumberjacks had living quarters on top and rode the lumber all the way to St. Louis. Busko said there were hazards on the way. "But since people from here took it down, they knew what to expect. They had to know the water, otherwise they would get stuck at times."

As more settlers arrived, more land was cleared and farming was done on a small scale. According to Ed Schneck, "Everybody had a cow in those days. If they didn't have any pasture, they took their cow to an area where there was pasture."

Another use made of lumber was turning it into charcoal. Busko explained how this was done. "They took logs 10 to 12 inches in diameter and leaned them against one another in the shape of a tepee. The logs were covered with dirt and then with rocks to hold the dirt in place. One side was left open for ventilation and the logs were set afire. They burned about two weeks and by that time were turned into charcoal. This was boxed and sold. Blacksmith shops were one of the buyers."

The Gensmann brothers owned a considerable amount of land on top of the mountain that was also heavily forested. In order to get the chopped trees down the side of the mountain, they built a chute and slid them down. One day some logs became lodged in the chute. One of the Gensmann boys went down with a cant hook to clear it. He was caught in the chute and was killed.

Henry Gunzel, who told of the tragedy, said, "When he hollered they thought he was clear, but it was because he was caught. That was the end of logging for Gensmann's."

Men from the township were still riding logs to the Rothschild Paper Mill when it was built around the turn of the century.

When the first settlers came, Rib Mountain was isolated from Wausau by the

Wisconsin and Rib rivers. Some of the older residents remember the first bridge across the Rib River that connected Rib Mountain and Wausau. Over 100 feet long, built of steel with a bow-like trestle over it painted red, it was named McCleary Bridge after a man by that name who lived in a little pink house near the east end of the bridge. Running almost straight east and west, it was high above the water to allow for high water from melting snow each spring.

This height made it necessary to have steep inclines on either end of the bridge. In winter farmers with a team and a load of wood sometimes found it impossible to get up the incline, so they drove over the ice of the river instead. Spring and summer had their problems too. Mrs. Anton Kozlowski said the spring floods caused long muddy stretches along the road next to the bridge, "so folks had to take a boat across the river." And the problem in summer was that the bridge was so narrow that Henry Heil couldn't get a load of hay across. Ed Schneck got a load of hay across, but his brother Clarence, who was sitting on top of the load, got stranded on the trestle of the bridge!

The Snake Bridge which replaced the McCleary Bridge in the early 1900's cost \$6,000 to build. Nathaniel Zarnke said it was built when the Rib River still flowed its natural course into the Wisconsin and the area where they worked was still dry land. He drove a team of horses for Fred Knopp, who had eight or 10 teams of horses on the job. The drivers used scrapers or slushers, driving around in a circle, scooping up the dirt, which was then dumped along the road bed that led to the bridge.

Mrs. Helen Hill said a ferry boat was used to cross the Wisconsin River between Rib Mountain and the Schofield-Rothschild area when it was all part of the Town of Weston. This type of transportation was discontinued in about 1896, and after the Rothschild Dam was built in 1909, residents of the area could walk across the dam from one side of the river to the other.

The Rothschild Dam also created Lake Wausau, a large expanse of water that goes beyond Snake Bridge and changed the mouth of the Rib River.

Cow paths, wagon trails and logging trails were the first roads in the township.



Skidding logs with steam engine.



Frank Busko, right, with unidentified partner prepare to saw trees on Hardwood Ridge Hill, Town of Marathon.



Meeting Night
2nd & 4th Tuesday
7:00 P.M.
VALLEY INN

Rib Mountain Lions Club

When someone came to take up farming, a road was built to his farm. So the first roads had many "bends!"

They were not only crooked but they had many sink holes. When Henry Gunzel was 17 years old he helped haul rocks to fill the holes. In front of his home on Rib Mountain Drive steel runways were placed on the road so cars could get across.

When the county first started to patrol roads, John Sullivan was hired as a pathmaster to keep the roads in driveable condition.

A number of old-time town residents told about how they got snowed in in winter after a big snowstorm. It usually took a while before the roads were plowed out. In about 1950 a Huber Road maintainer -- an old dilapidated farm tractor -- was purchased. Roman Gaulke and Otto Holtz did contract snowplowing for the township. When more financial stability was reached, the Huber road grader was traded in for a small Allis - Chalmers snowplow.

After LeRoy Jonas Jr. was elected chairman in 1951, a zoning map was created. Roads were surveyed before they were built, and standards were set much higher than average. Roads were built wider, with shallower ditches and brush control to help reduce snow clogging.

A unique street naming idea was employed by the Town Board -- after birds and flowers. The "bird" streets are north of the mountain, while the "flower" streets are south and east. These names not only give color and life to the community, but residents can be identified as living in the township when their numbers are checked in a telephone book.

As population increased, roads were platted out in traditional blocklike form, except in areas that could not conform to this pattern. An example is Lakeshore Drive, which follows the contour of Lake Wausau, with lots between street and lake.

Lots around the mountain have not been completely platted. Ken Pospychalla, building inspector for the town-



Mural of Rib Mountain done by LeRoy Jonas Sr. as it appeared in the former City Hall at Third and Forest streets.

ship, says the areas west and south of the mountain are largely agricultural, while the east and northeast are mostly residential.

Whereas logging, farming and mining were the first chief means of livelihood, logging has been discontinued and farming has made great changes. Small-scale farming became a large-scale operation for some, but many others found other employment with the result that there are just 15 farms in the township with cattle, and five fulltime farmers. They are James Mathie, who runs the Schuette farm; John Henry Sullivan, Fred Doepke, Harold Hall and Ed Beyer.

The extent of mining in Rib Mountain is related in the "Economic Development" portion of the book.

Though there aren't many people farming any more in the township, population has increased -- 417.5 per cent between 1930 and 1970. Present population is estimated at 5,800.

People struggling with sinkholes in the early part of the century would have been amazed if they could have seen the Highway 51 Beltline that now skirts the east side of the mountain. The project took more than six years to build, beginning with aerial photographs taken May 7, 1956, and ending with the opening of the highway Oct. 11, 1963.

A total of 100 parcels of land were purchased to build the by-pass, but the cost of the land was only one-eighth of the total cost of \$8,759,800. The work involved brought about the expense. Highway engineers reported 3,420,000 cubic yards of earth were moved in building up or cutting down the bed for the new right - of - way; 250,000 cubic yards of rock were moved and 562,000 tons of gravel brought in to serve as a base. Topping it off was a concrete slab containing 474,600 cubic yards of concrete.

A total of 24 bridges were built, including those over the Rib and Wisconsin rivers.

The completion of the Highway 51 Beltline was a step forward for the entire area from Wausau to Mosinee; and this was the first time traffic destined for points beyond Wausau could travel around it instead of through the heart of the city.

As population grew, so did the problem of sewage disposal. The problem was explained by William H. Doyle, director of the North Central District, Division

of Environmental Protection of the Department of Natural Resources:

"The geological formation of the area is pre-Cambrian granite, and the layer of the glacial drift is very shallow. As a result, many people have been unable to obtain a satisfactory private water system and properly dispose of their septic tank effluent."

But according to Jonas, plans are all made to attach the Rib Mountain district with Rothschild's sewage and water system. When these facilities become a reality, he expects an increase in service centers and neighborhood shopping complexes.

And a Barton-Aschmann Associates analysis states, "Like the last two decades, the Town of Rib Mountain will continue to be one of the prime areas of residential growth. When sewer and water facilities become available, the population increase will accelerate above past trends and is estimated to reach between 10,000 and 12,000 by 1990."

In earlier years too much water often created problems in the northeast corner of the township. Ed Novitzke said there was a terrific flood around Labor Day 1942, caused by heavy rains in the upper Wisconsin River area. Dams went out at night at Brokaw and Grandfather Falls at Merrill, resulting in a three-foot wall of water coming down the river. Residents along the river front were notified that the water was on its way, and prepared for the onslaught by moving furniture up on blocks. Nearly everyone's basement filled with water in a 15- or 16-block area from Chellis Street to Cottage Street.

In the Novitzke home at 1406 Third Avenue 10 inches of water covered the first floor. The family left home in a rowboat. Many families couldn't go back home for three days. When they did they found the floors full of silt and sand.

There were two more floods after that, resulting from spring thaws and ice jams. But finally something was done to keep the river from flooding.

In the spring of 1971, with permission from the Department of Natural Resources, a dike was built along the river front in the areas where the river had a habit of overflowing its banks. Surveys were taken to establish where the shoreline was at

one time. Beginning on the surface, the corps of engineers, assisted by some volunteers, coated the waterline with rotten granite, then filled in stretches underneath the water that they had sandbagged before.

Novitzke said the number of workers totaled 50 at times. The job was completed in 1974, and the area has not flooded since.

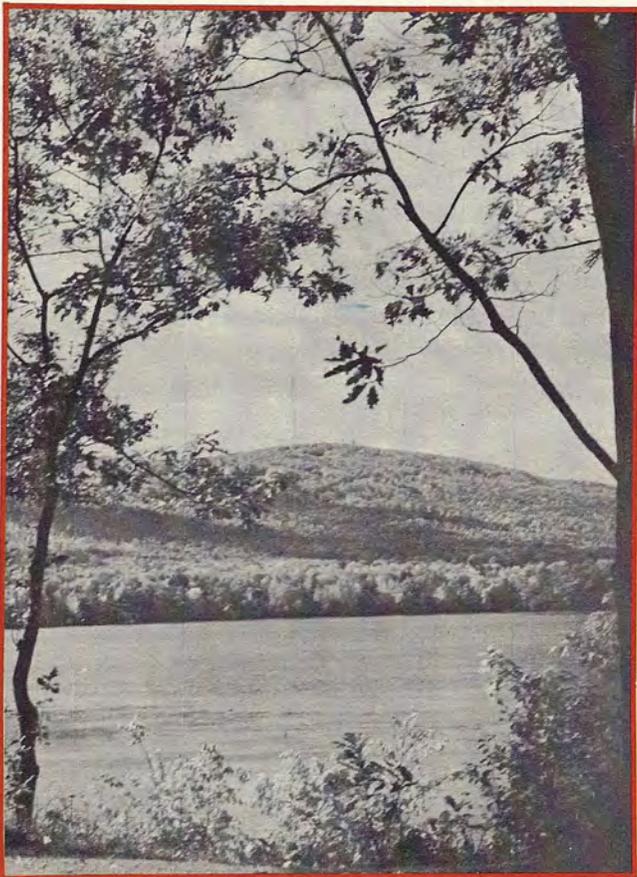
The other extreme, the top of Rib Mountain, has been utilized by two local television stations to provide a wider coverage. The antenna on the mountain is now being shared with still another station, Channel 20 (WHRM), a noncommercial broadcasting pioneer in the area. It went on the air for the first time Oct. 27, 1975.

Quoting from the Wisconsin Valley Shopper, "After five years of hard work, red tape, and hundreds of thousands of dollars spent, North Central Wisconsin is finally having a taste of noncommercial television."

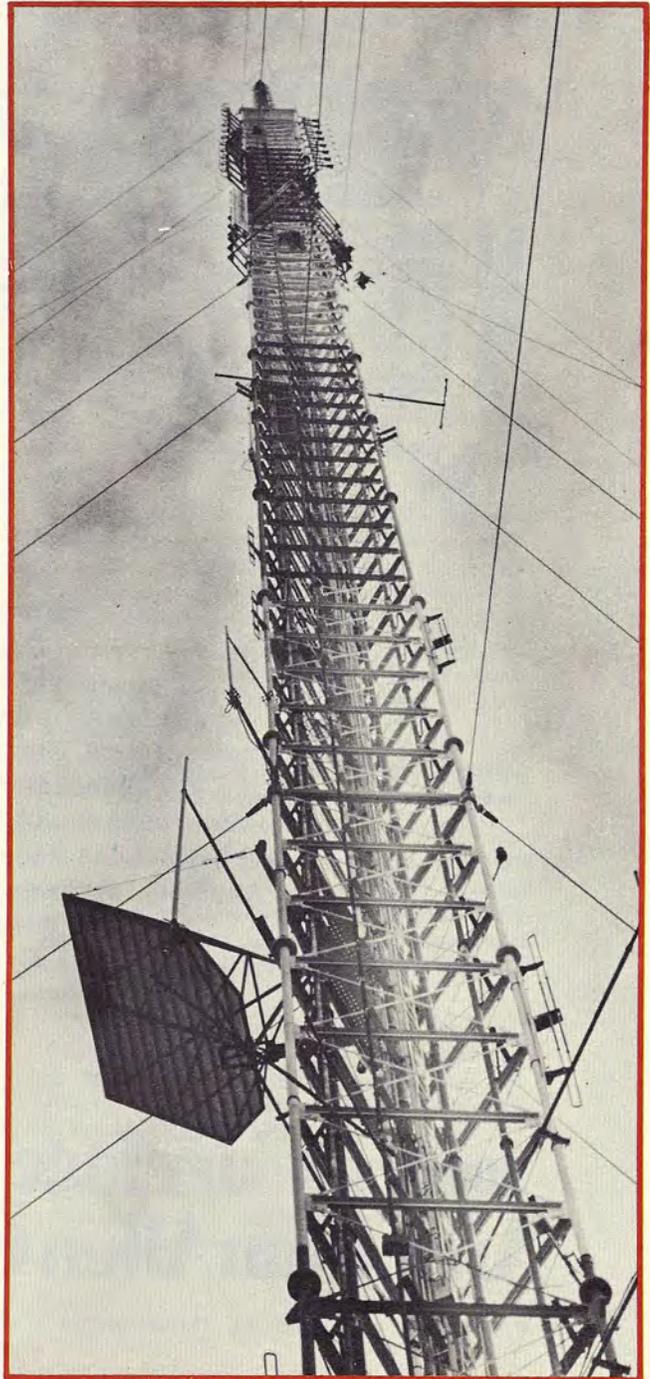
WHRM covers an area of approximately 60 miles in every direction, including Wausau, Marshfield, Stevens Point, Wisconsin Rapids, Rhinelander, Merrill, Tomahawk, and the rural areas of 17 counties.



House on South Third Avenue during flood of 1942.
Photo Courtesy of Chester Mendrzycki.



A Summer view of Rib Mountain, looking across Lake Wausau. (Record Herald)



Television Tower atop Rib Mountain. (Record Herald)

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Economic Development:

From Lumbering to Recreation

"Blos baumann" (only woods) turned out to be the first means of making money in the township, first with logging, then with the building of a number of sawmills. The most information was given on the Anchor Sawmill, owned by Melchor Eichert. Nathaniel Zarnke said his father, Charles Zarnke, purchased it from Eichert in 1904, renting it to Mortenson & Stone Lumber Co. for two or three years.

The rent was paid partly in cash and partly in wood that was planed in the mill. Trimming wood was sold to the Northern Hotel and slab wood to the Wausau Laundry. About 32 men worked in the mill, living in a bunkhouse cook shanty across the road. Their pay was one dollar a day and "beans," meaning their meals. For this pay they worked 11 hours a day.

After wood became scarce Mortenson & Stone no longer wished to rent the mill, so Charles Zarnke took over its operation with the intention of selling it. But within a year the mill burned to the ground.

Other names of mill owners that have been preserved over the years are Bremer & Sullivan; Buchberger; A. Prott, and Zochert, who had a mill on Black Creek in the southern part of the township.

Ed Schneck said in early years a man by the name of Heinemann had a landing along the river. He bought logs

from farmers who had no other income, taking the logs to mills by way of the river.

Some area farmers drove into Wausau with a cord of wood to sell at the market square.

Another natural resource was the tremendous supply of quartz from the massive white quartzite formation of the mountain, mined as early as 1893. Estimates of its thickness have been made as somewhere between 1,000 and 4,000 feet. The Wausau Quartz Company and the Wausau Sandpaper Company hauled the quartz by team from the mountain.

Minnesota Mining & Manufacturing Co. still has a quarry in the township, consisting of 280 acres.

Another mining venture was gold mining, but it was discontinued because of the slight amount of gold found. Billy Moy, who lives near the mountain, says the shaft where gold mining was done is now closed.

Other business ventures were the Rib Mountain Granite Company, organized in 1925, making finished granite; and the Charles Huckbody Ice and Fuel Company on South Eighth Avenue.

The growth of business and industry in the township can be seen in the following figures: 12 business places in 1922 as compared to 92 in 1975.

The brothers began to build homes in the lumber yard and then move them. Heating, electrical and plumbing systems were built in the factory and moved to the site of the new homes. The first 15 homes were delivered in 1960.

In 1962 they formed the Housing Service Company and were joined by Ed Starostovics, an engineer. In 1964 the name was changed to Wausau Homes, Inc.

The demand for these homes created the need for another plant, and the Schuettes chose Ottumwa, Iowa, as their second Wausau Homes manufacturing site. During 1972, over 2,000 homes were delivered throughout the midwest.

Soon after Wausau Homes was established, Weston Homes, Inc. was formed. Its origin stemmed from a home designed to meet the growing need for a lower priced home. A second Weston Homes plant was built in Newnan, Ga.

In 1971, Clifford Schuette became interested in a truck body building company in Marion, Wis. After he took over the business it picked up and at present Marion Body supplies truck bodies to many industries within the transportation field.

Meanwhile, Weston Homes were being built in Alaska, South America, western Africa and in the Near East.

In 1974 Wausau Homes erected a model home village in which homes were built at varying prices. Fourteenth Street in Wausau was the site of a new residential project.

The latest enterprise is known as the Schuette Inc. Metal Division, headed by Jim Warner. In addition to supplying both Wausau and Weston Homes with millwork, it also solicits and signs contracts for metal fabrication work from other companies.

The Schuette milk hauling route of 1935 that expanded to a multi-million dollar operation in 1976 exemplifies ingenuity, go-gettiveness and master workmanship. We salute these brothers and are happy to claim them as fellow townsmen.

Two former industries in the township were very successful. One was the Jonas Fur Farm that started in 1941 and ended in 1970. The farm covered an area from Robin Lane to County Trunk NN and from Martin Avenue to Howard Johnson's. As many as 2,000 mink a year were raised. The business was discontinued for two reasons: the Highway 51 Beltline cutting through their land, and the fact that much foreign fur was being imported and there was too much competition. LeRoy Jonas Jr. said their original farm was on a sand knoll which is now the interchange of County Highway NN.

The names of those early business places were Marathon Paper Mill Co.; Sacramento Suburban Fruit & Land Co.; Wausau Quartz Co.; Fenwood Lumber Co.; J.D. Jones Land Co.; Northwest Flint & Sandpaper Co.; Mosinee Land, Log and Timber Co.; Wausau Investment Co.; Anderson Timber Investment Co.; John Weeks Lumber Co.; Marathon Land Co.; and Dessert Lumber Co.

While many companies in the Rib Mountain area had their roots laid in the lumber years, Schuette Companies -- now almost 80 per cent lumber oriented -- had their beginnings in the milk business.

In 1935 Earl Schuette purchased the milk route he had been operating in Wausau. With the help of his brother Clifford, the business was run successfully for five years. When the route was finished for the day, the brothers had half a day left to turn to some other occupation.

So Earl purchased the component parts of a sawmill, and after the milk was



First house and barn of the Philip Drums, grandparents of Mrs. Louise Graefe, in Section 18, Town of Flieth, later Rib Mountain. (Photo provided by Louise Graefe)



Schuette Brothers Super Hauler in action.

delivered Earl and Cliff cut framing lumber. In the summer months they used the lumber to build homes.

When World War II broke out the brothers provided hardwood for wartime use. This new business took up so much time that Earl sold the milk route in 1942. He purchased a lumber company, and went into partnership with Robert Stephan. In 1946 Stephan's interest was purchased by Cliff Schuette and Schuette Builders Co. was formed.

The business included all the components needed for building a home. And they built a home right in the lumber yard.

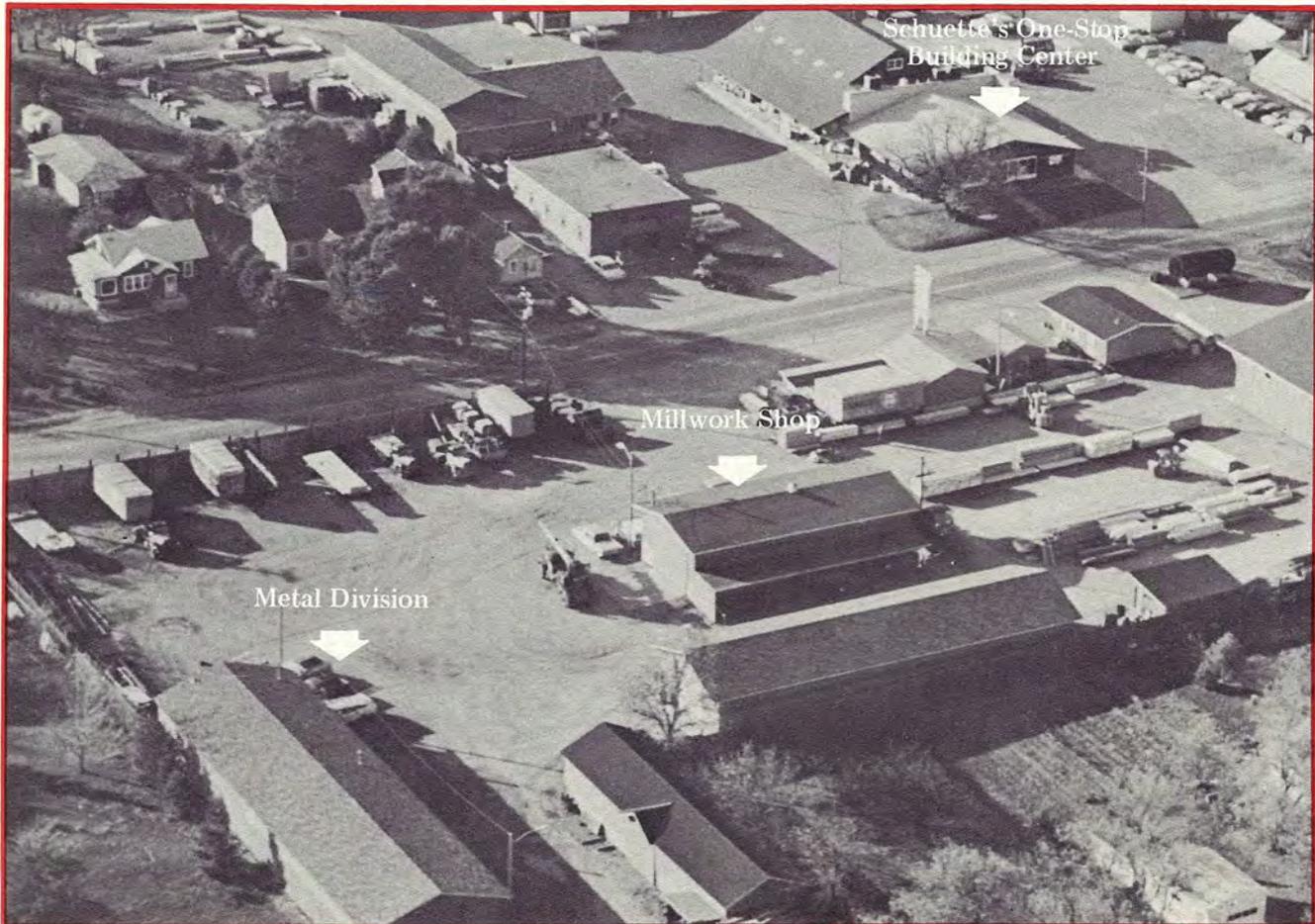
The next step was to design and patent a "Super Hauler" that was operable on any 3- to 5- ton truck. With this innovation they were able to move houses or barns. As freeways were built and many homes needed to be transplanted, Cliff formed an organization called Schuette Movers of Milwaukee. The moving of northern Wisconsin homes was headed by Jack Peterson under the name of Schuette, Inc.

In the 1950s Marvin Schuette joined his brothers to form Schuette's One-Stop Building Center, which offered everything the home builder needed.

The Gunzel & Gunzel Fruit Farm consisting of 88 acres in the Robin Lane and Eagle Avenue area was also very prosperous. Ralph and Henry Gunzel said that before the fruit farm was developed their father had a truck farm, taking produce to stores and to private homes. On the fruit farm when cantaloupe were being harvested, the Gunzels picked 1,000 melons every day. They continued to operate the farm for a time after Ralph became sheriff and forest ranger.

An industry that is reaching greater proportions each year is the Rib Mountain Ski Corporation. That long mountain presents a potentiality for growth in the skiing field probably unequaled in the state.

The development of the ski area began in 1936 when a government project during the Roosevelt administration put the CCC boys and the WPA to work to begin the building of one of the finest ski areas in the Midwest on Wisconsin State Park land.



An aerial view of Schuette's One-Stop Building Center.

For many years, Rib Mountain was operated by the then named Conservation Department of Wisconsin, who in later years turned the operation over to a group of local businessmen from the Wausau Metropolitan Area, with the given name of "Rib Mountain Committee." This committee worked directly under the supervision of the Marathon Civic Corporation, a division of the Wausau Area Chamber of Commerce.

With the rapid growth of skiing in the early 1960s, a need for private expansion was felt necessary, and in 1964 the Rib Mountain Ski Area was leased out to Carmelo Oliva, a local businessman.

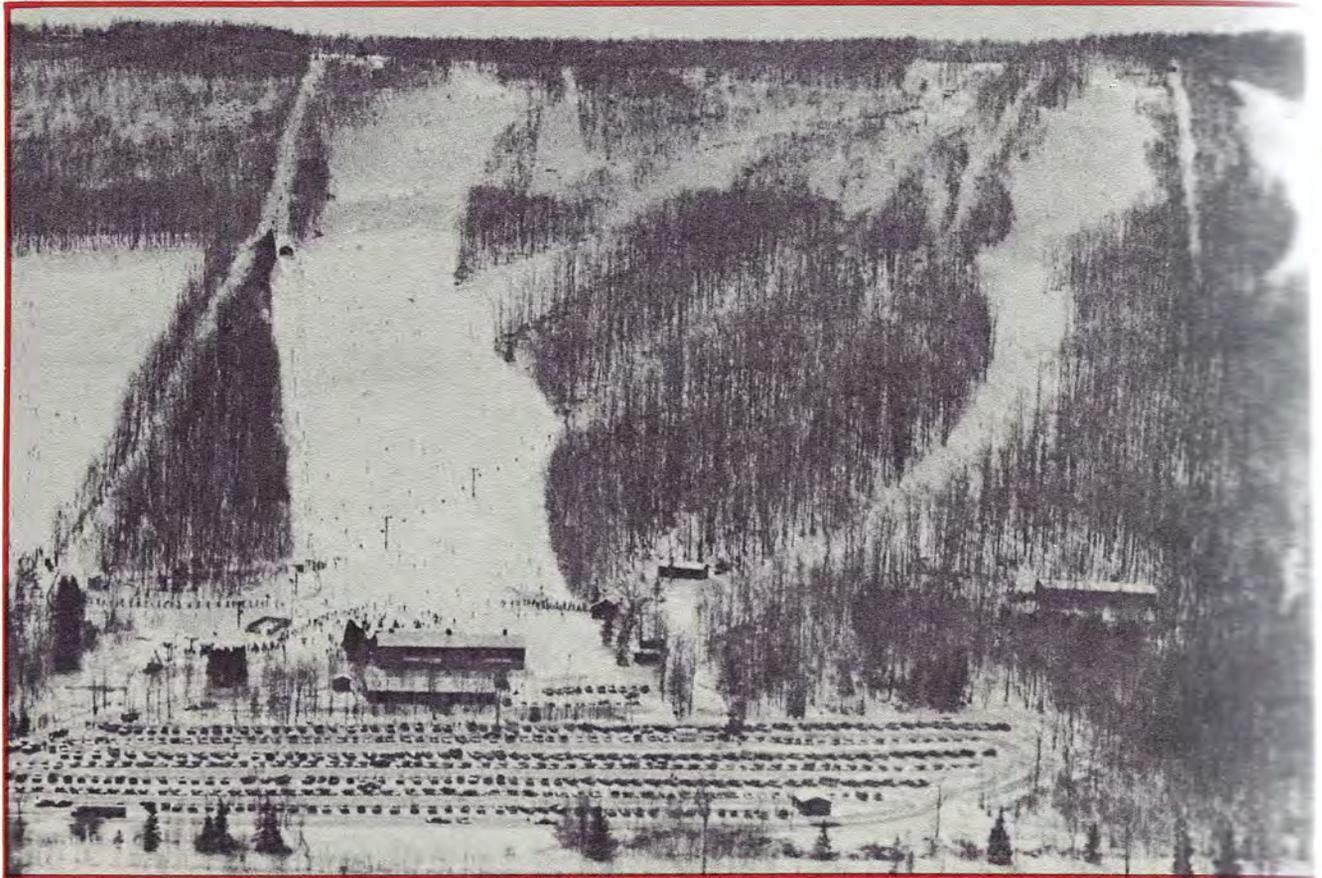
Since obtaining the lease of Rib Mountain Ski Area in 1964, and the formation of a corporation known as Rib Mountain Ski Corp. headed by Mr. Oliva, there has been invested in excess of \$750,000 in the expansion of the facilities here at Rib. The expansion includes a completely new snow making system which has been added to over the years to make it one of the finest in the Midwest. Compressed air and water, shot out of 12 enormous nozzles, can deposit as much as an inch of snow an hour over 2,000 square feet of earth. It enhances the grooming of the hill when Nature forgets to send down enough snow for good skiing.

A new T-Bar was added in 1965 along with the remodeling of the Chalet to include a new cafeteria and cocktail lounge. A new administration, rental shop, ski shop and ticket sales building was added in 1965.

In 1969, a 3,300-foot Chairlift with a vertical rise of 604 feet was built at a cost of \$200,000. A sun porch with infrared heaters was also completed that year.

Skiing at Rib Mountain in 1976 offers 15 slopes that vary from gradual to steep, to suit each skier from beginner to expert. All the slopes are serviced by the lift system, including rope tows and T-Bars as well as the Chairlift.

With an eye to the future, Mr. Oliva bought the Rib Mountain Golf Course with 120 acres of land which lies directly below and adjacent to the ski area. Plans are now in the making for a condominium village to set itself around the golf course, and a new year-round Chalet and Clubhouse. The golf course for summer and ski area in winter provide recreation on or near Rib Mountain practically all year long.



Ski Slopes of Rib Mountain, showing Chalet & parking lot (Record Herald)

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Government:

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The area now constituting the Town of Rib Mountain was part of the Town of Weston until 1905.

In that year, the Wausau Pilot published the separation of the area with the statement: "That portion of the Town of Weston lying west of the Wisconsin River was, by the passage of a resolution, made a separate town and named the Town of Erickson, in honor of George Erickson, the town chairman. This will leave a vacancy to be filled on the board for a chairman for the eastern part of the town."

Erickson's chairmanship of the Town of Weston goes back to April 9, 1901, when the newly - elected Weston Town Board met at the Schofield Town Hall, W.H. Hewitt, after taking oath of office as chairman, said he could not serve because of ill health and other infirmities. After due consideration his resignation was accepted. George Erickson was appointed chairman.

Erickson was active in other facets in the township prior to 1901. A Rib Mountain plat book states he was a supervisor of the Town of Weston as far back as 1892, when highways were being laid out in the township. He was elected assessor in 1904. His father, Torger Erickson, was also mentioned as having a part in governmental affairs.

The Town of Erickson was renamed Town of Flieth, and kept that name until it

was changed to the Town of Rib Mountain in 1930.

George Erickson was chairman from 1905 to 1936 with the exception of 1924-26 when A.B. Klemm held that post, and 1927, when W.W. Whiting was chairman for one year.

Erickson was followed by Charles Norton from 1937 to 1943; Adolph Thompson, 1943-45; Louis Dustin 1946-1950, and LeRoy Jonas Jr., 1951 until the present.

A listing of other officers from 1921 to 1975 and the years they served follows:

CLERK	FROM	TO
Will W. Whiting	1921	1922
George Gunzel	1922	1923
Elmer Bandy	1923	1924
W.A. Chellis	1924	1944
David E. Tornow	1944	1947
Florian Kostuck	1947	1951
George L. Moser	1951	1955
Dorvin Tornow	1944	1947
Florian Kostuck	1947	1951
George L. Moser	1951	1955
Dorvin Tornow	1955	1958
George L. Moser	1958	1960
Mrs. Louise Moser	1960	1969
Harvey R. Mathwick	1969	still in office in 1976



George Erickson



A. B. Klemm



W. W. Whiting



Charles Norton



Adolph Thompson



Louis Dustin



LeRoy Jonas Jr.

TREASURER	FROM	TO
Adolph Thompson	1921	1923
Ed Klavitter	1923	1924
Albert Buhse	1924	1926
Clara Fearson	1926	1935
Henry Gunzel	1935	1943
Mrs. Henry Gunzel	1943	1944
Mrs. Louis Moser	1944	1947
Mrs. Margaret Schneck	1947	1951
Frank Tucek	1951	Still in office in 1976

Edward Hinschel	1936 Sept.	1936
Martin Abitz	1937	1938
Emmet Smith	1939	1940
Mrs. Emmet Smith	Dec. 1940	April 1941
John Henry Sullivan	1943	1951
Herman Hintz	1949	1951
Edward Novitzke	1951	1958
Edward Novitzke	1960	1964
Pat Pospychalla	1964	1969
Edward Novitzke	1969	still in office in 1976

ASSESSOR	FROM	TO
Reinhold Stein	1921	1938
John Heil	1938	1939
Reinhold Stein	1939	1940
Louis Moser	1940	1941
John Heil	1941	1944
Herman Aschebrook	1944	1947
John Kutella	1947	1951
Herman Aschebrook	1951	1953
John Kutella	1953	1968
David Hase	1968	1971
Robert Patterson	1971	1974
Kenneth Pospychalla	1974	still in office in 1976

SUPERVISOR	FROM	TO
Fred Knopp	1928	1929
Herman Hintz	1929	1932
Chester Larson	1933	1936
Adolph Thompson	1936	1943
Roy Hanson	1938	1939
Howard Bandy	1941	1944
Martin Abitz	1944	1947
Emmet Smith	1947	1949
Henry Heil Jr.	1951	1960
Ervin W. Beilke	1958	1962
Donald Buttke	1962	1973
Raymond Heiser	1973	still in office in 1976

SUPERVISOR	FROM	TO
Edward Klavitter	1928	1932
Charles Norton	1932	1933
Fred Doepke	1933	1936

If happenings in early history of the township were as complete as the list of names, there would be a lot more to tell. Pioneers have a few word pictures and facts, such as:

Before the time of the automobile, the head of the house would hitch up his horse to a wagon or sleigh to attend a town meeting, there to argue about taxes or where to build a road or a bridge or a school.

Mrs. Ed Schmidt, formerly Olga Hanson, said the town treasurer would come to the homes to collect taxes. Wonder if he was ever invited in for a cup of coffee? And Mrs. Selmer Graefe said she remembers going to the home of the town treasurer in earlier years to pay taxes. She didn't think the town hall was heated unless a meeting or other event was scheduled.

Henry Gunzel, who was treasurer from 1935 to 1943, said the amount of money the town had to work with was much less than it is now. "Those were depression years yet," he said, "and we couldn't do much."

Perhaps the taxpayers went to the home of the treasurer because there was no one at the town hall to collect taxes? This is another supposition on how things were in the old days.

But meetings were held there until the spring of 1964. They were held in whatever space was available, and if a large crowd was anticipated, they were held at the Rib Mountain shelter house.

The old town hall was sold in 1964 to Joseph Moser, Marathon. He purchased only the shell; furnace, water heater and other accoutrements were sold to the highest bidders. Moser discovered, however, that the expense of moving the hall would be too great, so he resold it to Frank Novitzke, 3201 N. Mountain Road, who took it apart and built a garage from the lumber. The land where the town hall had been standing, 2703 Rib Mt. Drive, was sold to Floyd Radant on Jan. 11, 1967.

According to LeRoy Jonas Jr., town chairman since 1951, a lot of consideration went into the building of a new town hall -- how big it should be, and where it should be located. The town board purchased the present site at 2000 N. Mountain Road from Walter Radtke for \$1,000. The site turned out to be an ideal location since it is in an apex of a "Y" between the Highway 51 Beltline and Rib Mountain Drive. Half of the building is on natural land; the other half was filled in.

Once Jonas became chairman the philosophy of the town board has been "to always live within its means. . .to handle the public money as if it were your own." As a representative of Rib Mountain on the County Board, Jonas helped develop the first Marathon County zoning program. A zoning map was created in Rib Mountain to try to keep the residents together.

"Zoning is the result of planning," he said. "First lay out your plans, then look at the property to see what it can best be used for." Several restrictions were not allowing businesses to locate in the residential areas, and not allowing unsightly billboards in the township. Road building was also done by surveying first, he said.

In keeping expenditures within its limits, Jonas said the town board always tried to budget for equipment so it would come out of a segregated highway fund, so there would be no need to go to the taxpayers and ask them to support the purchase.

He noted that the taxpayers' money is deposited in legal accounts so it can draw interest.

Local assessment is made according to valuation, equalizing against other towns in the county, he said. He felt that a professional assessor should be obtained in order to make accurate assessments of property.



First fire truck owned by Town of Rib Mountain. (Record-Herald photo)

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On the subject of annexation to Wausau, Jonas said outside areas would prefer to work with Wausau and/or adjoining municipalities in a cooperative manner.

"We are trying to capitalize on the fact that we are a residential - recreational - light industry community," he said. "We have a potential mini-park on Cloverland and Rib Mountain Drive, and are trying to get people to beautify the place."

Present officers, in addition to Jonas, are Frank Tucek, treasurer; Harvey Mathwick, clerk; Greg Gaetzman, assistant clerk; Edward Novitzke and Ray Heiser, supervisors; Ken Pospychalla, building inspector; Harlan Hebbe and Joseph Patnode, constables; Evelyn Hebbe, health officer, and Jack Schaefer, Fire Chief.



Town Board Ray Heiser, Supervisor, Ed Novitzke, Supervisor, LeRoy Jonas Jr., Chairman, Harvey Mathwick, Clerk, Frank Tucek, Treasurer.



Town Crew: Phil Lenard, Alvin Trester, Doug Kohnhorst, Lenny Mohr, Terry Narlock.



Rib Mountain State Park:

People Have Always Wanted to Reach the Summit

People who wished to get to the top of the mountain before 1931 had only a narrow hazardous trail to follow. But after they reached the top the sight was worth the effort. On a clear day visibility is as far as 30 miles, and there were many interesting things to see on the mountain itself.

The mountain was made a state park in 1922 when 40 acres of land were donated by the heirs of Jacob Gensmann and another 120 acres were purchased by the Kiwanis Club of Wausau and turned over to the state by the organization.

A committee was appointed by the state legislature to study the mountain's initial needs, and upon its recommendation \$1,500 was appropriated for the placement of a suitable marker and the construction of an automobile road to the top of the mountain.

Jesse A. Clark, County Highway Commissioner, directed the building of the three-mile winding road from County Trunk N up to and into the park. Heavy timber had to be removed; four tons of dynamite were used to blow out stumps and rock, and horses, tractors and an assortment of large and small plows and other excavating machinery were employed.

The road follows the south slope up a winding trail, twisting around rock formations and ascending gradually, so the

drivers and their passengers can enjoy the sights on the way. A deep ditch was dug alongside the road so the melting snow from the top of the mountain in the spring of the year would have a place to come down without cutting into the roadbed.

The road to the top of the mountain was completed in 1931. Another road at the top of the mountain was laid out to make a continuous loop, permitting views in all directions.

At the time of completion of the road a ceremonial program was held to celebrate the occasion and to honor the people who had accomplished this great task. George Erickson, foreman of the construction, said he had been helped by the finest crew of men he ever had, giving Jesse Clark the credit for constantly supervising the work. It was noted by Mr. Clark that 100 men were employed who would otherwise have been out of work. Not one of the men was injured while on the project.

The original 160 acres of the park was enlarged by another 120 acres to the southwest, it was announced by the Wisconsin Conservation Commission on March 30, 1933. The new addition was made to protect the road, prevent commercialism in the park, and to add ground that contained some of the most unusual rock formations. Another 40 acres was later donated by the Minnesota Mining Company.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) cleared land for the ski slides, moving big rocks and removing trees in 1934. Care was taken to preserve old mines, old rock formations and all large trees possible.

The park was officially dedicated Sept. 13, 1934, at a ceremony on the mountaintop. Sponsored by the Kiwanis Club, a dedicatory address was given by Governor A. G. Schmedeman from a specially constructed platform built of cedar posts set over a clump of rocks. Representing the Gensmann family at the dedicatory program was Mrs. Lydia Gensmann Oldenburg. She said she and other members of her family were happy to have donated land for the park in memory of their parents. A marker had been installed on the highest point of the mountain shortly before the dedication.

At a dinner at Hotel Wausau later that day, Gov. Schmedeman listed the advantages of having the top of the mountain as a state park, as told to him by the Kiwanis Club members and other people interested in its development.

It is the highest point in Wisconsin within a radius of 400 miles; it commands a wonderful opportunity for wireless telegraphy; it provides a marvelously natural location for a fire look-out station and astronomical station; it is of glacial formation and should be preserved for science in its natural state; it might provide an opportunity for the study of lung diseases and research; it has been visited by many students of geology and botany from other states in the study of vegetation and rock formation; it has clear springs and all the requirements for a state park, and it is nature's gift to an appreciative citizenry and should be set aside for state purposes only.

It is the 10th park in the state of Wisconsin to be designated as a state park.

Later enlarged to include 608 acres, about 160 acres make up the ski area.

The top of the mountain has other interesting features which can be better appreciated in the summertime.

An area inside the "loop" (the road that circles the top of the mountain) has tables and benches to accommodate picnickers. Before or after their meal they very likely roam among the huge quartzite boulders; examine the lichen growing on the boulders; climb up on the queen's chair and also climb the Van Douser Tower.

Named in honor of Alton Van Douser who was instrumental in the development of the park, the tower has three observation platforms, a 360 - degree angle view and 84 steps. The top of the tower is 1,980 feet above sea level.



Carmelo Oliva adjusting the snow maker



Look-out tower on top of Rib Mountain



Early spring golfing at Rib Mountain Golf Course

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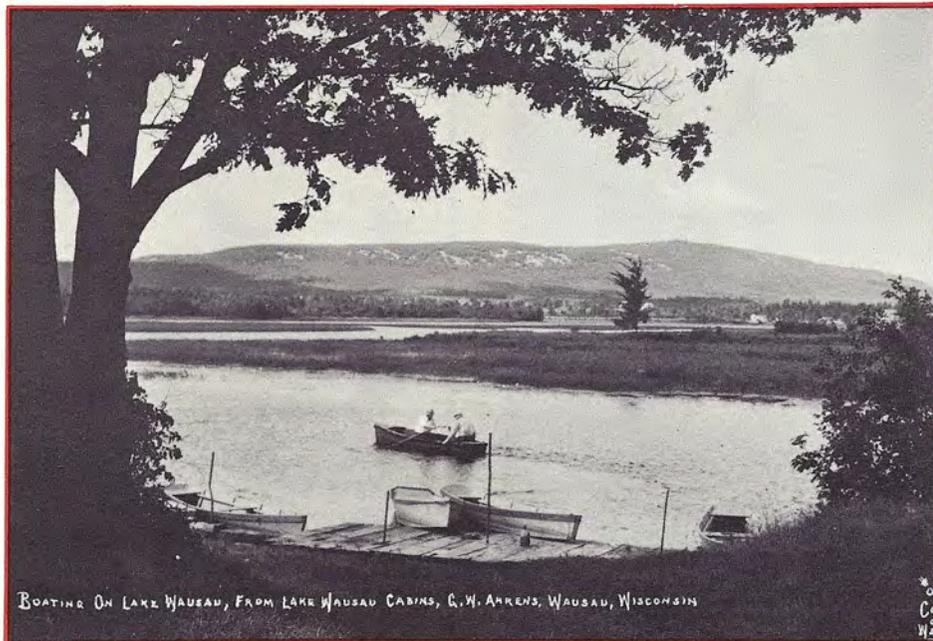
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BOATING ON LAKE WAUSAU, FROM LAKE WAUSAU CABINS, G. W. ARRENS, WAUSAU, WISCONSIN

Colby
Photo

On Lake Wausau, where Zahn Wausau Cabins are now located on Flieth Street, looking toward bridge. Wild rice can be seen growing in the lake.

courtesy of Colby Photo

Yacht's

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Rib Mountain Churches:

There are five churches in the township; the sixth is expected to be completed in May 1976, and land has been purchased for the seventh.

One characteristic of nearly every church was that members held services in their homes before a church was built.

BETHLEHEM LUTHERAN

Bethlehem Lutheran Church, the first church in the township, was originally a school built in 1890. In 1900 it was purchased by Zion Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, Wausau, for use as a mission church. Charter members were Henry Adler, John Hildebrandt, William Graveen, Philip Drumm and Gust Dahm. The Rev. Paul Bretscher of Zion held services there until 1906 when he accepted a call to another parish.

After Trinity Lutheran Church on Wausau's west side was founded by Zion, its pastors took over the mission church in the Town of Rib Mountain. First was the Rev. J. Th. Destinon; then the Rev. Fred Foerster, and in 1918 the Rev. E. H. Bertermann, who served Bethlehem for the next 56 years. The first several years he borrowed a horse and sleigh from Otto Kitzerow, a butcher, to get to Rib Mountain in winter. In summer, parishioners took turns going into Wausau to get him in their cars; at times he rode his bicycle. Later he bought a Model-T Ford. He held German

services there in early years, and conducted summer school for confirmation classes.

In the early 1940s Pastor Bertermann began a remodeling job on the interior of the church. Farmers in the congregation cut trees from their woods, taking lumber to Rhineland for flooring and to Curtis & Yale for molding. Their logs went to Underwood Veneer for paneling. A new altar for the church was made from red granite purchased from Fred DeVoe of the Town of Texas. In addition, the Rev. Bertermann planted trees around the church and generally kept it up.

Pastor Bertermann retired in 1970 and died the summer of 1974. Regular services in the church were discontinued, but reunion services have been held once a year, along with weddings and other special events. On Aug. 7, 1974, the name of the church was changed to the E. H. Bertermann Memorial Chapel, with a dedication service conducted by the Rev. Ervin Seidel of St. Stephen Lutheran Church, Wausau. Pastor Bertermann's daughter, Mrs. Robert Pieper, served as organist. Norman Klemm was general chairman of the dedication committee.

OUR SAVIOR'S LUTHERAN

Our Savior's Evangelical Lutheran Church came into being on Sept. 10, 1942, under the direction of the Mission Board of



E.H. Bertermann Memorial Chapel. (Photo by Thomas Boerter)



Church of Christ.



Our Savior's Lutheran Church.



Rib Mountain Lutheran Church.

the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Served by Pastor Lyle J. Koenig, the first service and Sunday school were held in an abandoned school building on Flieth Street owned by the City of Wausau, with 48 members present. The formal organization occurred Oct. 21, 1942, with four families as charter members; Alfred Prast, Earl Prast, Walter Radtke and Walter Schriber.

After purchasing the school building its inadequacy became apparent. Additions and renovations were made, and a Christian Day School was begun under the leadership of Adolph Wilbrecht.

On Oct. 29, 1944, the two-classroom addition was dedicated. Even this was not enough for the growing congregation. Therefore a complete rebuilding program was begun in 1948. More classrooms were built that served as the sanctuary also, dedicated Dec. 6, 1959.

An entirely new church edifice was built and dedicated May 5, 1963. Four pastors have served: Lyle J. Koenig 1942-54; Donald W. Meir - 56; Roy Reede - 65; Raymond A. Schultz 1965--.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES

Around 1900 Jehovah's Witnesses, then known as Bible Students, met in private homes and rented halls. An active group of about 25 met in the Rib Mountain area in 1950. In 1951 the congregation rented a room at the Labor Temple in Wausau.

Shortly thereafter it was decided to have their own assembly hall, and in 1956 the foundation of their Kingdom Hall was laid at 333 Imm Street in the Town of Rib Mountain.

Around 1972 the hall became too small so two congregations were formed, both using the same hall but on different nights. In 1974 a new Kingdom Hall was built on the corner of Bos Creek Road and North Third Avenue, this hall being known as the North Congregation, and the hall on Imm Street as the South Congregation.

South Kingdom Hall has five rotating elders, one of whom is the presiding overseer each year. Attendance at each meeting averages around 85.

RIB MOUNTAIN LUTHERAN

Rib Mountain Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod, 3010 Eagle Avenue, was originally a mission church of Trinity Church

in Wausau, encouraged by the Rev. E. H. Bertermann. The land was purchased from Harvey Nelson, and groundbreaking ceremonies were held April 28, 1963. Dedication of the church and installation of its first pastor, the Rev. Harold F. Winter, took place Sept. 13, 1964.

The Rev. Winter accepted a new charge at Lake Kagona, Wis, in January 1976. On March 28, 1976 the Rev. Thomas Hedtke was installed as the new pastor of the church.

The congregation grew from 181 persons when it was first organized to 777 in 1975. A number of church groups serve in a variety of ways. Several Bible classes hold meetings; Sunday school is conducted for 140 grade-school children, with special sessions for various age groups during the week. A vacation Bible School is held each summer involving approximately 160 three-year-olds through eighth grade pupils.

In November 1975 a Schulmerich Magna Bell Carillon was installed. The sanctuary, church offices, a kitchen and the building consists of four classrooms that are used for Sunday school and vacation Bible School. For a time some of the classrooms were used by first grade classes of the Rib Mountain School.

The church is now self-supporting.

CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Labor Temple in Wausau was the first meeting place in August 1954 of the Church of Christ. The first minister was Carl Frazier, and the congregation's first church was on the corner of Sixth and Scott streets in Wausau.

A new church was built on the corner of Rose and Park avenues in Rib Mountain, with first services being held March 3, 1968. In 1973 Carl Frazier moved to North Dakota, and Donald Laughary, who replaced him, also served as a volunteer on

the Rib Mountain Fire Department.

Elders and deacons were appointed by the congregation to serve in various capacities. The present minister is Roy Ratcliff who came in June 1975.

Worship services are held every Sunday morning at 10:30 and Sunday evening at 6:30. Bible classes are held every Sunday morning at 9:30 and every Wednesday evening at 7:30. The church is open to any visitors who are interested in learning about its doctrine and beliefs.

SEVENTH DAY ADVENTISTS

The Seventh Day Adventist Church, located at 2201 Oriole Lane, Town of Rib Mountain, had 13 members when it organized May 8, 1898. At first services were held at homes of members; at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Scott Street; at the Eagles Hall, and at the Odd Fellows Hall.

Then for a time services were held on the second floor of the former Kresge Store, now Singer Sewing Machine Co. A history written of its early years tells that children from west Wausau watched the water tumbling over huge rocks in the river bed as they crossed the narrow steel bridge spanning the river. People from rural districts came with horse and buggy.

In July 1949 the congregation purchased the former First English Lutheran Church in the 700 block of First Street. In 1967 the church was sold to the city of Wausau for a parking lot, and again services were held in halls.

But this was only a temporary arrangement. Land was purchased from Elmer Mesalk in January 1968 in the Town of Rib Mountain. Building was begun that September and the congregation moved into the new church June 28, 1969.

Services are held on Saturday, with Sabbath School -- study of the Bible -- at 9:30, conducted by elders and laymen.



Jehovah's Witnesses



Seventh Day Adventist Church.

Church services begin at 11:00 a.m., conducted by Elder Duane Brown.

Parochial school history of the church is told in the chapter on schools.

CHURCH OF LATTER DAY SAINTS

Missionaries of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints coming to Wausau in 1952 found two members living here. As more were added to the congregation, a Sunday school was organized with Glen Davis as superintendent and Elvira Davis as secretary. Services were held at first in homes, but with the need for larger quarters the Seventh Day Adventist Church on First Street was rented, then a room in the former Labor Temple at South Third Avenue. Land was purchased for a chapel site at 19th and Wegner streets. Before the building began, members grew beans on the site to help pay for the church. It was dedicated May 10, 1964.

Some of the societies in the church are the Relief Society for the women, Primary for children to age 12, Mutual Improvement Association for youth, and the Genealogical Society. A number of their young people have served on missions.

A new chapel seating 289 persons presently being erected on Rib Mountain Dr. in the Town of Rib Mountain is expected to be completed in May. The branch president is James Schofield.

MOUNT VIEW BAPTIST CHURCH

Mount View Baptist Church held services for about a year in the Rib Mountain Municipal Center after organizing in 1968. The congregation outgrew this meeting place and the Underwood Chapel was rented where services are still being held at the time of this writing. Three acres of land

on North Mountain Road were purchased from Frank Busko, where it is planned to build a church, gymnasium and possibly a school. The congregation wanted to locate in the shadow of Rib Mountain and it got its wish. It hopes to begin construction by 1978.

Sunday school is held every Sunday morning at 10:15 for all ages; church services are at 11 a.m. and evangelistic services at 7:30 p.m. Prayer meetings are held every Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Persons in the township belonging to the Catholic faith attend the Holy Name Church if they live on the east side of the Beltline. Those on the west side attend services at St. Matthew.

EASTER SUNRISE SERVICES ON RIB MOUNTAIN

A youth group of the Underwood Memorial Chapel in about 1930 developed the idea of holding services on the top of Rib Mountain on Easter morning. Parents and friends attended the first services, with the invitation extended to the public and to other churches to participate in the following years. A soloist, singing groups, educators and others took part.

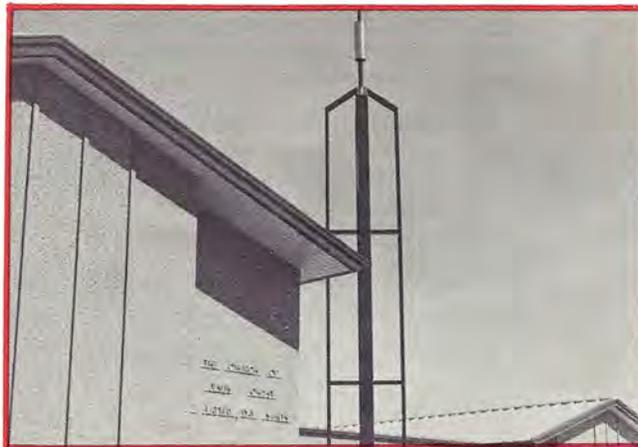
A cross was erected in later years by fathers of some members of the youth group. Electric lights were installed on the cross and were lit over the Holy Days of Easter. The lighted cross could be seen from Wausau at night.

A pageant entitled "Go Tell" was presented for many years, with rock formations on Rib Mountain used as a tomb. Also becoming involved were trumpeters from junior and senior high schools, Boy and Girl Scouts and Youth from many denominations. The program continued for about 40 years.

Due to lack of sponsorship and climatic conditions the service was not held in 1974 and 1975.



Holding Easter Sunrise services on Rib Mountain.



The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.



Rib Mountain Schools:

The first known school in the township, built of logs and attended by Mrs. Ella Douville some 90 years ago, would not come anywhere near today's standards. But it had a teacher who taught readin', writin' and 'rithmetic. Perhaps the teacher even taught the English language to children who came from homes where German, Swedish or some other language was spoken.

The next school on record was built in 1890 on land donated by Julius Wittke and was named School District No. 3, Town of Weston. It was used as a school until 1900, when it was remodeled and used by the Bethlehem Lutheran congregation as a church. The church still exists.

In 1900 a new school was built on the Marathon-Weston line and was called School District No. 6. In 1905 the name was changed to Joint District No. 6 -- Flieth Marathon. The name was changed to Woodlawn School, and the school was moved two miles west onto Emil Kolbe's property. Some of the children were still enrolled there.

One of them, Mrs. Robert Ames, says it had the earmarks of most schools of the time -- outside pumps and toilets; a long recitation bench in front of teacher's desk; a hall where the children hung their coats, and a wood heater in back of the room. All the children walked to school unless they were lucky enough to have a parent or

neighbor hauling milk past the school. Mrs. Ames' son Robert taught in the school in 1963-64, the last year of its existence. It was converted into a home.

A brick school house was built in 1905 near Mosinee Hill and was named after the hill. Two of the pupils who attended were Mrs. Cornelia Davis Spatz and George Erickson. Mrs. Spatz said the "drinking fountain" was a pail of water and a dipper that everyone used. The school was discontinued in 1955 and also converted into a home. Edwin Ahles is the present owner.

Two other schools were built in what was then the Town of Flieth -- Mountainside and Roosevelt. The former was located on the east side of N. Mountain Road until it was demolished by a tornado in July 1935.

The following year classes were conducted in the old fire station on the site of the present Radant Insurance Agency, 2703 Rib Mountain Drive, until another school could be built.

The new Mountainside School, on the corner of N. Mountain Road and Partridge Avenue, sometime between 1950 and 1955 had a petition out to join Wausau Joint District No. 1. During the hearing William E. Moore, county superintendent of schools, noted the tremendous shift in population to cities and areas immediately ad-

jaacent to cities. This resulted in Mountain-side School having an enrollment of twice its capacity of 30 pupils. The petition was not granted, and in 1955 the school was sold to the Seventh Day Adventists who used it for a parochial school for about 10 years. Later it was converted into a home.

The Roosevelt School was on Flieth Street, and was named after President Theodore Roosevelt. A picture of the President hung on one of the walls. One of its teachers was Mrs. Emma Schultz, who walked three miles from her home on Prospect Avenue to the school to teach. "For \$26 a month I started a fire in the morning in the wood-burning furnace; swept the floor; and when it was time to start classes I rang the bell in the belfry," she said.

Mrs. Schultz also taught for a time at the Mosinee Hill School and remembers having 69 pupils. She taught in a number of other Marathon County schools for a total of 52 years -- longer than any other teacher in the county, and never missed a day of teaching. Mrs. Schultz is the former Emma Von Kanel.

Roosevelt School continued to operate as a public school until 1941, when it closed and the pupils were enrolled in two schools in the city. The two schools were Irving and G.D. Jones. In 1942 the building was purchased by Our Savior's Lutheran Church. The urgent need for a consolidated school prompted Mr. and Mrs. Harold Foscender to go out and get signers for a petition to build such a school. They obtained a majority in proportion to the population, and in 1955 the first unit of the Rib Mountain School at 2701 Robin Lane was erected. This unit consisted of six classrooms which replaced the two remaining rural schools, Mosinee Hill and Mountainside. Because of the rapidly growing population in the township and the increasing number of children, it was one of the first reorganized schools in the county. At this time the Town of Rib Mountain became School District No. 8.

County-wide the rural schools were being closed also. Miss Irene Kronenwetter was supervisor of the rural schools from 1934 until the last school closed in 1965.

Additions to the Rib Mountain School were built as the need arose. In 1957 two classrooms were added; in 1959 four more classrooms, and in 1961 two kindergarten rooms, a gymnasium, kitchen,

locker rooms and auxiliary rooms. The 1976 picture shows the addition of two mobile units, one for reading and one for industrial arts. The first 2 relocatable classrooms were used for the sixth grade students in 1968-69. The following 2 more rooms were added and since then housed the first graders.

On July 1, 1962, state law decreed that all school districts had to be in a district which operated a high school. So District No. 8 of the Town of Rib Mountain was abolished and made a part of the Wausau School District. Since consolidation in 1962 the total enrollment in the Rib Mountain School has been rising each year. Enrollment grew from 381 in 1961-62 to 573 in 1968-69.

Meanwhile the upper grades were being taken to other schools. In 1962-63 Rib Mountain School had from Kindergarten through sixth, and in 1970-71 it dropped another grade. The 1975-76 enrollment from kindergarten through fifth grade is 503. Grades six through eight are bused to John Muir Middle School.

Staff members at Rib Mountain School in 1975-76 include Charles Slock, principal; 19 teachers; one secretary; three aides; three custodians, and four employees on the hot lunch program.

Two parochial schools are also operated in the area. Our Savior's Lutheran School has four classrooms and one classroom for youth. There are four teachers on the staff with Norman Dux as acting principal.

In 1972 when the new Seventh Day Adventist Church at 2201 Oriole Lane was completed, grades one through eight were conducted in one of the rooms off the sanctuary. Present enrollment is 17 pupils and the teacher is Jerry Pierce.

LeRoy Jonas Jr., town chairman, says he is a strong believer in neighborhood schools for children from kindergarten through sixth grade. "I believe the School Board and the public should have the right to determine the curriculum and set the policies," he said. "Duties should be carried out by the staff."



Rib Mountain School.



Fire Department:

What would Rib Mountain look like today if its present modern fire-fighting equipment would have been available in 1905? That's when fire burned off all the tall virgin timber on the mountain.

Before 1954, whatever fires occurred in the township had to be extinguished by the Wausau Fire Department, which sent out one truck and three men, the truck carrying only 150 gallons of water.

As evidence of the inadequacy of this fire protection, when a fire started in a small home owned by a Mrs. Evenson on the south shore of Lake Wausau early one afternoon, although the Wausau Fire Department was called, by the time it arrived the house burned to the ground. This home was next to a lake full of water and was still a total loss.

This property loss got some action going in late spring of 1954. With LeRoy Jonas as chairman, a group of Rib Mountain citizens held a special meeting to discuss having their own fire department. Dave Tornow and Col. Lawrence Schoeder were appointed to a committee to decide what was needed for fire protection. They purchased a used 1942 International rural fire truck from the Village of Spencer for \$1,500. This truck had a 500 gallons per minute front mounted pump and a 1,000 - gallon stainless steel water tank. This was the extent of the equipment.

At that time there was no place to keep the truck, so it was parked at the Jonas Fur Farm until a fire station could be built.

A barn fire on the Kasten farm on Highway NN again brought out the Wausau Fire Department because there was nobody as yet to operate the Rib Mountain fire truck. The Wausau truck ran out of water, and other buildings on the farm were in danger, so Otto Holtz and LeRoy Schoessow took the Rib Mountain truck to the station on Thomas Street and South Third Avenue for a load of water. By the time they returned to the fire scene with the water, the barn had burned down.

It was clear that a fire department had to be organized and a fire station built or remodeled. At the next special meeting the townspeople decided to remodel the old Town Hall at the intersection of Highways N and NN, along the shore of Lake Wausau.

A concrete floor was laid to replace the wood floor; a large overhead door was cut in the front of the building; the interior was removed, and it was insulated and covered with dry wall. LeRoy Braunel did the work.

The town board appointed three fire commissioners, Ralph Gunzel, Norman Klemm and Art King. The first organizational meeting of the Rib Mountain Volun-

ter Fire Department was held Oct. 12, 1954, with citizens invited to become active members without pay. The fire commissioners appointed Clairemont (Steve) Fehlhaber chief; William Hubbard secretary, and Felix Pospyhala treasurer.

Fire fighting equipment was then ordered and the fire truck remodeled so that ladders, extinguishers and hose could be carried on the truck. The work was done by Andrew Boruch.

The first really involved fire was to the William Knoblock garage on Rib Mountain Drive, a roof fire on March 2, 1955. Here the volunteer department met its first challenge and saved the building with just \$124.53 damage.

On March 7 of that year Harold Norton was appointed assistant chief and Marcel Bychinski captain. At the April annual town meeting the town board and taxpayers agreed to a \$1,400 yearly budget for the department.

On June 6 the first annual fire department dance was held at the Rothschild Pavilion. On Oct. 3, a used 1940 Packard Ambulance was sold to Rib Mountain by the City of Schofield for \$1.00.

In November a car crashed into the front of the fire station, damaging the entire front of the building and a new L.P. gas furnace. The front overhead door landed on top of the fire truck, and the wrecked auto ended up half inside the station. The station was repaired and remodeled with a furnace room in the rear, making room for two vehicles in the station.

On Oct. 18, 1956, a used 1946 Chevrolet gasoline tank truck was purchased from the Mobil Oil Co. at Green Bay for \$150. It was used as a water tanker and carried 600 gallons of water. Now the volunteer department had a total of 1,600

gallons of water at its disposal when called to put out a fire.

In March 1957 Chief Fehlhaber resigned because of a job opportunity in Racine. On June 3 Harold Norton was appointed chief.

On July 1, 1957, a new resuscitator was purchased and a public notice issued stating that ambulance service was available from the Rib Mountain Fire Department, and that all members were trained in advanced Red Cross First Aid. On Sept. 9 Chief Norton announced the appointment of Dave Kramer from Master Mechanic to Assistant Chief.

In June 1959 the department received a used 1951 Cadillac ambulance from the City of Wausau Police Department. It was equipped with two-way radio.

When the new Rib Mountain Municipal Building was erected in 1963, the central portion of the building became the new fire station. This gave the department much needed room for the four vehicles it was now operating -- two ambulances, one fire truck and one tank truck. The second ambulance was only used as a backup unit for race-track standby service or other public events where an ambulance was needed.

With the building of the new station, a new radio fire alarm sounding system from Central Station was installed. Also in 1963 another Cadillac ambulance was received from the Wausau Fire Department. It was a 1955 model and the 1940 Packard ambulance was given to the Marathon City fire department.

In December 1964 a new 500 GPM pumper fire truck costing \$12,000 was purchased. Manufactured by the Melroy Co., Hortonville, it was larger and more powerful than the older pumper. The old Chev water tanker was traded in, so the department now had two pumpers carrying 1,000 gallons of



Firemen: Lt. Marvin Ruechel, Chief Jack Schaefer, Asst. Chief David Kramer, Inspector Dennis Merriman, Fireman Gerald Wagner, James Pietrowski, Clarence Johnson, Capt. William Pevytoe, Fireman Bernell Ellenbecker, Lloyd Erdmann. On Truck: Duane Chaignot, Lawrence Andreas, Charles Schweikert, John Meuret.



Firemen: Ronald Strasser, Richard Kleiber, Donald Loeffel, Lyle Woller, Dale Marschall, Nicholas Rochon, Wilbur Ninnemann, John Pierschalla, Donald Carl.

water each. This new truck cost township taxpayers less than \$9,000 because the firemen saved from their annual dances enough money to turn over \$3,000 toward payment of the truck. Keeping costs down while bettering the equipment indicated these volunteer firemen were dedicated to their task.

In spring of 1965 Chief Harold Norton resigned and Lt. Harvey Nelson was appointed the new chief.

The purchase of a used 1,600-gallon fire fighting unit in April 1967 necessitated the purchase of another pumper, a used 500 GPM pump from the Marathon City Fire Department for \$300. This was also paid for by the firemen's annual dance. With Marv Ruechel engineering the project, the firemen of the department worked together to install the pump and all necessary piping, converting this tanker truck into a fire engine pumper unit. The old original 1942 International Pumper was finally sold at this time after many hours of firefighting and water pumping. It had served the town long and well.

About this time another Cadillac ambulance became available from the Wausau Fire Department -- a 1959 model. The 1951 ambulance it replaced was sold to Hamburg where a fire department was being organized.

In 1969 a used 1962 International Four-Wheel Drive State Conservation fire warden's truck was received from the Mercer ranger station on a bid price of \$915. All the equipment had been removed, so the fire department had to build up its own necessary fire-fighting equipped truck. A pump was purchased and a tank designed and built. Chief Harvey Nelson and Assistant Chief Dave Kramer engineered this unit and built it into a rural grass firefighting attack truck. It has saved the firemen many hours of hard hot work fighting grass fires.

On Jan. 1, 1973, after seven years as chief of the Rib Mountain Fire Department. Harven Nelson resigned because of ill health. Lt. Jack Schaefer was appointed the chief by the fire commissioners.

Also in 1973 a new GMC Ambulance was purchased from Marion Body Works, Marion, Wis., for \$14,000. This unit was a special type ambulance, meeting all Federal Highway Safety Emergency Medical Treatment requirements. The Rib Mountain Lions Club donated \$1,000 and the fire department from annual dances donated another \$1,000 toward payment of the

ambulance.

During the 21 years that the Rib Mountain Fire Department has been in service to the community only two lives were lost by fire: one a car accident, the other a gasoline truck tanker fire. The number of fire calls per year average about 35 and ambulance calls per year about 125. At the close of 1975 there were 30 volunteer firemen on the department operating the two fire truck pumpers, one grass fire truck and two ambulances. All five vehicles are two-way radio equipped to Wausau Central Station, the main dispatcher for the Wausau Metro area.

As the fire department facilities became modernized, so did the area it served. For example, Millie Schaefer, wife of the fire chief, said there used to be many more chimney fires in the area. But as wood stoves were replaced by oil or gas heating systems, this type of fire is being eliminated.

So the Rib Mountain community is well protected, its fire department keeping up with the increase in population, business and industry. The fact that all the manpower is voluntary is a tribute to the men who are willing to serve in this capacity, leaving their jobs when duty calls.



Rib Mountain ambulance purchased in 1974. Left, Capt. William Pevytoe; right, Fire Chief Jack Schaefer. (Record-Herald photo)

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Recreation:

From shinny to skiing, from trail climbing on foot to hill climbing by automobile; from tobogganing to golf -- this tells in a nutshell the development of recreation in Rib Mountain.

Interestingly enough, some of the first sports in the area are still popular today -- namely, tobogganing in winter and baseball in summer. These were favorite pastimes of Mrs. Ella Douville, nee Erickson, born in the township Oct. 14, 1876. One of a family of five boys and five girls, she enjoyed tobogganing down Mosinee Hill.

Ella's nephew, William Erickson, named among his favorite sports hunting and playing shinny. The latter was a game played by two people kicking a tin can back and forth across ice. The goal was an area in the opponent's territory. The forerunner of hockey, perhaps? William was also the nimrod of the family, running from his home to Wausau Senior High School -- a distance of seven miles!

Early settlers found good hunting and fishing in the area. Mrs. Herbert Dahm said "When we were small the woodcutters found deer so thick they killed them with an ax."

The old-timers liked to get together at barn dances, with the whole family going along. Dance halls were built, also taverns -- or saloons as they were first called.

Rib Mountain's first recreation enthusiasts were hikers who climbed the mountain to explore its mysteries and to picnic on its top. The treading of many feet eventually created hiking trails up the side of the mountain.

Long before the road was built to the top of the mountain in 1931, possibilities for use of the north side for skiing were seen. But it was another five years -- 1936 -- before any actual skiing was done.

The Rib Mountain ski area has been developed into a popular recreation spot used by thousands of skiers each winter, when 15 slopes are open to all ages and skills, all the way from the bunny run for children and slopes for beginners to the Big Rib and headwall for experts. Each slope has a name, and all end up near the Chalet at the base. A Chair-lift, T-bar lifts and rope tows bring the skiers quickly back to the top.

The Chair-lift, 3,300 feet in length, is also operated in the summer months as a tourist attraction.

The state park also has a camping area for tourists who wish to spend more than a day on the top of the mountain.

Rib Mountain was the scene of a national championship hillclimb on June 16-17, 1957. A popular sport among European sports car enthusiasts since the very

inception of the automobile, it came to the United States immediately following the second World War. Because of the growth of sports cars the Sports Car Club of America was formed. This organization, initially made up of amateur sportsmen only, sanctioned a series of competition events for sports cars. The series included closed circuit racing, road racing and hillclimbing, and determined a national champion driver.

The Rib Mountain Lions Club, then in its second year of existence, arranged for the SCCA (Sports Car Club of America) National Championship Hillclimb to be held here. Following a test event the prior year for midwestern competitors only, the event drew most of the nation's top sports car race drivers. They competed in the most expensive and exotic sports cars of the day.

Entrants such as Eddie Crawford, Milwaukee advertising executive Jim Jeffords, John Kilbourn, Carl Haas, now a leading sports car importer, and Augie Pabst, brewing heir who became a champion driver, headed the entry list. At the time the event was held on Rib Mountain, these men were the best in the country.

It was a prestigious event, one of a half-dozen hillclimbs in the country. The overall victor was "Honest John" Kilbourn, winning with an average speed of 88 miles per hour on the 1.9-mile uphill course. To achieve the time, Kilbourn topped 100 miles per hour several times on the 1400 foot ascent. Following his victory, he called the hill a "tremendous course," which was quite a compliment from a driver of his reputation.

Kilbourn's compliment was a credit to the Rib Mountain Lions Club which organized the event with the support and sanction of the SCCA. Organization of such an event is difficult and demanding.

Members of the Lions Club, headed by LeRoy Jonas Sr. and program chairman LeRoy Jonas Jr., with the assistance of local promoter John Moss and local auto dealer Walter Short, who acted as liaison officer with SCCA, staged a highly successful event. LeRoy Jonas Jr. said many of the drivers praised the course and saw possibilities for future hillclimbs.

Proceeds from the event were donated to the Lions Camp for the Visually Handicapped at Rosholt.

Although highly successful, and with hopes to make it an annual affair, it was never repeated on Rib Mountain. Successful in terms of competition and as a fund-raising venture, it put the Town of Rib Mountain among the elite communities of the country for one summer. It was a whistle stop on the glamorous SCCA National Championship circuit.

Another venture in professional sports in the township was State Park Speedway Inc. At the request of a number of persons who belonged to a midget racing club, a stock car race track was built in 1951 by Schmitz & Holtz Inc. on N. Mountain Road about a mile west of the Rib Mountain Golf Course.

A one-fourth-mile track was constructed for stock cars and a one-eighth-mile



John Kilbourn, victor of many SCAA national sports car races, patiently awaits his timed run up Rib Mountain's 1,400-foot ascent. (Photo by C.P. Plunkett, Courtesy of Rib Mtn. Lions)



An Austin - Healey 100-4, now a collector's item, awaits its timed run up the mountain before part of the crowd. (Photo by C.P. Plunkett, Courtesy of Rib Mtn. Lions)

track for midgets was built inside the larger track. Steel bleachers and a concession stand were built. It operated two years, then closed as stock car and midget racing died out. The bleachers were sold to the Marathon County Park Department.

In 1959 another group of stock car racers leased the track, building wooden bleacher seats. The track was dirt at first, then covered with asphalt. The cars were able to race at a higher speed on the asphalt track and the wheels sometimes broke off. On one occasion a wheel went into the bleachers and fatally injured two small children.

After that a concrete wall was erected with cyclone fence on top, in front of the bleachers. Otto Holtz and family operated the track from 1960 to 1963. Some racers in 1963 whose names are familiar to fans include Dick Trickle, Sonny Immerfall, and Don and Augie Winkleman.

After 1963 the track was again leased to a number of different individuals through the years. In 1969 it was leased to Phil Bickley who still operates it.

The first organized recreation program in the township dates back to the

summer of 1959 with the formation of the Rib Mountain Little League. Fifty boys were divided into four teams and their games were played among themselves. Each team furnished its own equipment and even a few of the bats were homemade.

Some of the original coaches were Bob Andringa, Harvey Mathwick, Harry Dalbec, Milton Huseby, Bob Osborne, Del Kluever, Ernest Schroeder, Walter Meyer, Jack Liepzig, Arnold Hoag, Vic Augustine, Larry Brown and Don Will. The following year a dance was held to raise money and six sponsors also contributed \$60 a year. They were Tornow's IGA, Schuettes Lumber, Carl Hoffman Construction, Super 29, Schneck's Standard and Pepsi Cola.

Originally the practices and games were held at the Rib Mountain School diamond. Then two diamonds were constructed on Ed Wolf's and Bill Hubbard's land on Lakeshore Drive. The town furnished some building equipment and did some of the clearing, but many fathers helped out. They made their own backstops from materials which Schuette's donated. Harold Beilke donated clay dirt for the infield. With the combined efforts of many town fathers, two good diamonds

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were built.

In 1963, when the original players had grown older, a Pony League was formed in addition to the Little League. The Rib Mountain Lions Club helped by buying T-shirts. The town board voted to allot \$250 in 1966 and this sum along with money raised at a dance and the sponsors' contributions made the league self-sustaining. In 1970 the organization was disbanded due to a lack of help and interest. The baseball equipment was sold to the Town of Weston. This activity was renewed during the summer of 1973 when some interested fathers helped organize the Rib Mountain Minor League.

The Rib Mountain ice-skating rink was another example of how people in the town banded together to organize a form of recreation for its youth. In 1970, an area behind the town hall was graded and flooded and lights were added. Ed Abendroth and Leon Howlett were instrumental in organizing this project. At the time, they checked with LeRoy Jonas who said the money was available, all they had to do was get people interested.

In 1971, the Rib Mountain Lions Club purchased a warming house from the county, painted it, and added a new roof. A supervisor was hired to oversee the rink. In 1972, hockey boards were added to a second rink, additional lighting was put in, and again supervision was provided. Two young men, Kim Orlikowski and Dick Palinek, were hired as rink supervisors. Jeff Plachtka supervised the rink during the winter of 1973-74 and Bob Patterson did the same for the following two winters. Since its inception, different groups have aided in flooding the ice, including the Rib Mountain Fire Department, the town crew, and volunteer fathers.

The formation of the Rib Mountain Recreation Committee was a real step forward toward meeting the needs of organized recreation in the town. The first meeting was held at Warren Terkelson's home on Dec. 11, 1972. To organize the ice rink, its supervision, and to get parents-involved in recreation, were the major goals of this group at the time. They were fortunate enough to have the support of the town board which believed that the community and parents should become involved in organized recreation for their children.

In the spring of 1973, the recreation committee was instrumental in coordinating a summer playground program with the help of Ray Kirschhoffer. This involved an

eight-week, afternoons only experience which included enrichment activities, crafts, games, special events, and bus trips for children. Volunteer moms ran the girls' softball program, and they continued to do so for the next few summers.

It was during this time that the idea of hiring a year-round recreation coordinator was initiated. Eventually Kathy Opall was hired to fill this position. That summer saw the laying of blacktop and fencing for the courts on the school grounds and work done on the school diamond for the minor league. (The tennis courts were finished during the summer of 1975, and again it was through the efforts of a cooperative town board and volunteer citizens.)

Another contribution of the recreation committee was the initiation of the Rib Mountain Springfest in 1974 which has been held early in June for the last two years. It is a joint effort by many community clubs to offer a day of fun and festivities in order to raise money for recreational purposes. It has included a children's costume parade, kiddie rides, craft and arts display, a pancake breakfast, beer-and-brats, an evening dance, concessions, and a dunk tank.

The summer recreation program was expanded in 1974. In addition to a complete afternoon playground activity, the following instruction was added; tennis lessons for boys and girls ages 10-15; boys' basketball; girls' volleyball, Tiny-Tots, and guitar lessons.

Except for the guitar lessons and bus trips, this entire program was made available at no cost to the youth of Rib Mountain. Boys' basketball and girls' volleyball also were offered during the winter. New classes introduced in the summer of 1975 were intermediate tennis, women's tennis, girls' gymnastics program was continued along with boys' basketball.

Our town should feel proud of its many concerned and involved parents who with the support of a cooperative town board have helped make Rib Mountain a leader in recreation.



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Rib Mountain Drive approaching Lake Wausau, at a time lake was flooded Sept. 1, 1941.



Approaching Rib Mountain on Highway 51 Beltline, crossing Wisconsin River.



Reminiscences:

A Sense of History is Within Everyone

The flavor of the kind of living experienced by the early settlers of the Town of Rib Mountain comes out real strong when they themselves tell about it. Some say there was not one foot of clearing when they first came. Trees were cut with ax or hand saw and stumps dynamited to make room for the first homes.

Mrs. Ella Douville, born in the township Nov. 13, 1876, to Mr. and Mrs. Torger Erickson, says her parents crossed the Rib River in a canoe to go shopping in Wausau before the bridge was built. Ella's nephew, George Erickson Jr., 80, says his father used to tell about how he led a cow at the age of eight when his parents moved here to homestead and clear the land.

George tells of the time his mother died, when he was six years old. The closest church was in Schofield, but since there was no bridge across the Wisconsin River, her body was taken to Schofield in a boat.

George also recalled times when he drove a herd of cows across the river to pasture; he in a boat while the cows had to swim. Ed Schneck, son of Anton, can recall cows swimming in the river too. "Such a thing would seem strange to the average person today," he said. "Kids wouldn't be able to understand it. They're used to seeing 'em on dry land."

Mr. and Mrs. Selmer Graefe provided a picture of cows swimming for this book. Not only did their cows swim, but so did their sheep and horses. "One of our horses swam all the way to Highway 29," said Mrs. Graefe.

Mrs. Graefe is the former Louise Moser. Her mother, whose first name was also Louise, was born in the township July 27, 1899. Mrs. Moser's father, Ulrich Kulow, came here from Germany.

Ed Schneck, who lived in the township 70 years, and George Erickson Jr., who was born here, know the names of most of the early settlers. In many instances they remember what roads those people lived on, their occupation and how much land they owned. Erickson said the first farm in the township was owned by a Mr. Peterson. He sold it to a Mr. Butzlaff who sold it to John Thiele and it is now owned by Max Mullen. The Mullens farmed until the state purchased 21 acres for the Highway 51 By-Pass and split the property. Mrs. Mullen says "There are homes up there now where the cow pasture was." The portion they have left is at 8201 Azalea Road.

Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Dahm have memories of cutting down trees with a hand saw and blasting stumps to clear the land. After the land was cleared, plowing

was especially difficult because, Herbert says, "A good many times we struck rock—we had to get the horses used to that." His wife added, "I done plowing too. One time we struck a rock. I jumped off quick, otherwise the plow would probably been laying on top of me."

"We cut a lot of wood," said Herbert, "using a drag saw for the big logs. We would get the neighbors together to split the maple. That was hard splitting." The Dahms owned 239 acres at one time, so help from the neighbors was appreciated. They also helped at threshing and silo-filling time. The crew was served breakfast, lunch at nine, dinner at noon, lunch at three and supper at six.

George Erickson in recalling how everybody helped each other out said, "The Dudek boys had a thresh machine, and they started threshing early in fall and kept on until November. Every place they threshed the men had a big feed. When they got done with one job they blew their whistle to let the neighbors know they were on the way."

Luxury in those days, according to Mrs. Dahm, was to go to town with a lumber wagon and buy groceries or to go to church, or walking to the neighbors in the evening with a lantern. Herbert thinks the old days were pretty good. "We didn't make what we do now, but we didn't have to spend what we do now. Them days we paid about \$16 for a cow."

When he hauled gravel out of gravel pits on County Trunk N, wages were \$1.50 a day. Herbert says that was top pay in those

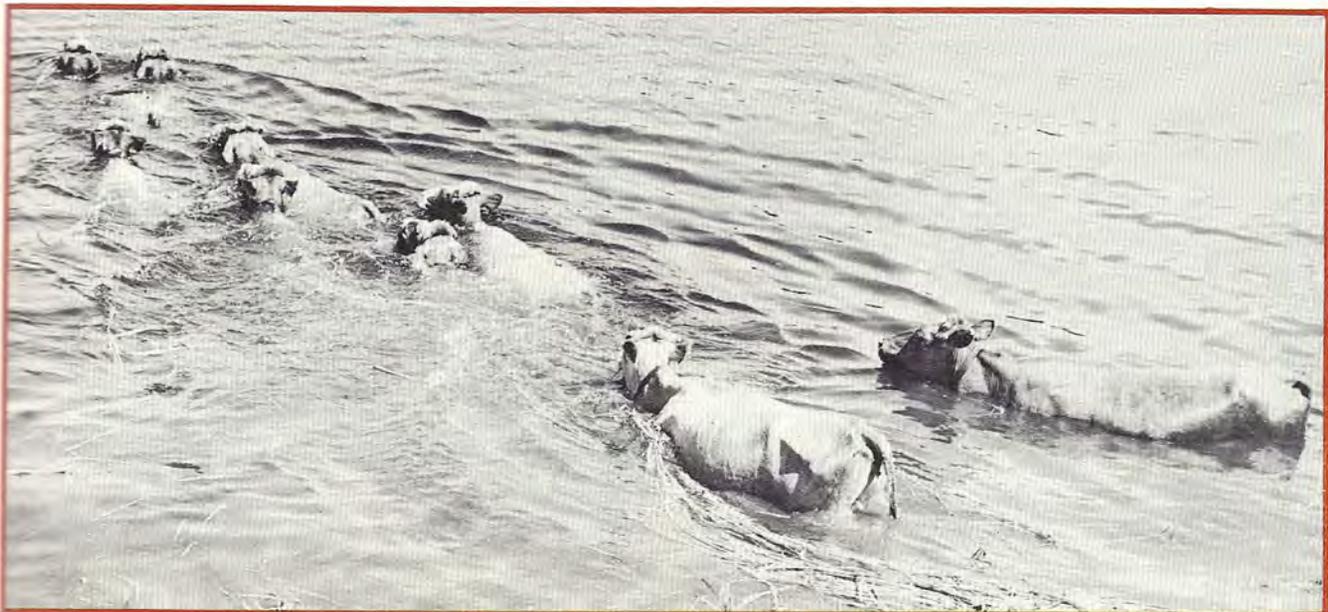
days. His wife feels that for them it was more convenient to do things the old-fashioned way. They have sold all their land except five and one-fourth acres, and perhaps it is just as well because, as Mrs. Dahm says, "Today the farmers have to do it all alone."

Mrs. Dahm, the former Margaret Graveen, was born Sept. 1, 1901, in a log house in Athens. Her husband was born in the township Oct. 11, 1896.

"Milking by hand in the morning and again at night, walking five miles to school and five miles home" was the way of life for Henry Heil. "In winter it was snowed shut so I couldn't go to school." Both he and the Dahms recall the snow was as high as the fence posts. Later on the farmers went together and built a snow plow so the milk truck could get through.

Henry remembers when kerosene lamps were used, but "I liked life back then. Everything goes too fast now. I had more money left when I got \$60 a month working in lumber camps than what I have left now. Everything was more reasonable. Now it costs more money." He remembers when there were parties among the neighbors. "We had barn dances -- with lunch and a keg of beer about midnight. Now everybody tries to beat the other one."

Similar thoughts were expressed by Norman Klemm, who said, "We didn't have the rat race you do now. You could go visit your neighbor. Today with a car you get farther away; and you don't get to see your neighbor."



Selmer Graefe's cattle swimming across Lake Wausau to an island to pasture.

Norman, who was born Feb. 17, 1909, says recreation also included corn husking bees. Prizes were put into a pile of corn and people would go through the pile looking for the prizes as they husked the corn. Norman's wife is the former Eleanor Thiele, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Thiele, who also lived in the Town of Rib Mountain. . . on the first farm in the township as noted previously.

Frank Busko, who was born in 1886 and came to the town in the early '30s, says "The land was all pine stumps when I came, and I had to dynamite them." He participated in fun things also, was a musician and did the calling at square dances. After he finished building a barn he had a dance in it. "We had a real shindig -- 50 pounds of bratwurst," he said.

George Erickson says he would walk six miles to barn dances and then walked the six miles home. One time he fell asleep walking. He felt his feet going in a ditch and caught himself before falling.

George's younger brother William didn't mention anything about barn dances, but he told of basket socials that were held in the Mosinee Hill grade school when he was a pupil there. Born in 1908, he remembers how cold it was in the house in the morning, so he dressed by the wood-burning stove. He walked seven miles to Wausau High School and was the only member of the family to graduate from high school. In his early years there would be gypsies coming through the area with horse and buggy.

Herbert and Margaret Dahm remember the first gypsies coming on horses, but "in later years they had some pretty swell cars -- better than we had." They would camp on people's property without asking, and "if we acted angry toward them they would get even by stealing."

Mrs. Klemm said "They came in such a group you couldn't watch them all. While one was asking to read your palm, another one would be putting stuff in their car. They stole wood and chickens. . ."

When asked, "Wasn't there anybody you could turn to for help?" Norman answered, "There were no telephones -- you couldn't call for help."

Mrs. Graefe said they took vegetables out of her garden and chickens -- "and they had great big Cadillacs!"

Henry Gunzel learned how to cope with gypsies when he was caretaker of Rib Mountain. "The way to handle them was to give 'em hell and make 'em move," he said. He recalled an incident when he had to outwit quite a few of them.

"One carful drove up, and the driver asked, 'How much do you charge a night?'"

"I told him, 'You can't stay here.' Then came another car, and another -- there were about 20 cars in all. I told the head driver, 'I'm going to send you to Marathon Park.' 'But we want to stay here,' he answered. 'All right, I'm going to get the sheriff,' I said and got in my pickup truck. They followed me down the hill, every one of them."

Henry's brother Ralph added, the way it is now, when someone does something wrong, "You pat 'em on the back, tell 'em to behave themselves and get a lawyer."

Henry recalls that as a boy he sometimes walked to get a sack of flour from a store where the IGA Foodliner is now located. But the brothers said they would just as soon live it all over again. "Now everything is in a hurry. You don't know what your neighbor looks like."



The old Town Hall after a car rams into it, causing much damage. (Record-Herald photo)



First ambulance received from City of Wausau in 1961. Left to right, Assistant Fire Chief Dave Kramer; Eugene Loeffel; Chief Harold Norton; Chairman LeRoy Jones Jr., and Mayor Ben Schuck. (Record-Herald photo)



Painting by LeRoy Jonas Sr. reflecting painting of fire which destroyed virgin timber on Rib Mountain about 1912.

LeRoy Jonas Sr. says there was a section on top of Rib Mountain called the "Black Forest" when he was a boy. Born April 18, 1898, in the Town of Texas, he moved with his parents and three other children to the Town of Rib Mountain when he was about seven. One Sunday his parents went to church in a surrey, taking the two youngest children with them, and leaving LeRoy and his older brother John at home. They warned the boys before they left against going up into the mountain, especially the "Black Forest." It was steep and they knew bear lived up there.

A warning such as this was to John just a challenge. "I'm not afraid of any bear," he told LeRoy. "If I see one I'll kill it with a club." So the boys went up a trail to the edge of the forest, John swinging his club. They came to a spot about 50 feet from a berry patch, and lo! and behold! There was a bear eating berries. Instead of John going after the bear with his club, he grabbed LeRoy's hand and the two ran back down the hill as fast as their legs could carry them.

The tornado that passed through the area in July 1935 held terror for those who witnessed it or heard it. Jonas says "We were sitting in a boat on Lake Wausau when we saw it coming right at us. We got out of there in a hurry." Good thing they did, because according to Louise Graefe it took water right out from the bottom of the lake "like when Moses and the Israelites went through the Red Sea."

Ed Schneck was in his garden when it appeared. His wife called, "Better come inside or you'll get blown into the river."

Mrs. Alois Schaefer and her children saw it from their home on South Ninth Avenue. Standing in their outside cellarway, they saw books, trees and boards flying through the air. Books from Mountainside School, perhaps? That school was blown down, also barns belonging to Henschel, Knopp, Schoessow, Goetsch and Dahm.

The Dahms said it came up about five in the afternoon. Some of the children were playing ball and were told to get in the house -- quick. Herbert went down last. They heard a "whshsh" and it was over. It was raining and pouring to beat the band," said Mrs. Dahm.

After they felt it was safe to come out they saw fences down, cows on the highway, chickens lying all over, killed. Pigs and horses were lost. "We lost everything but our house and garage -- and we didn't have any insurance on account of the depression," said Herbert. One of their losses was a brand new machine shed. Damaged was a new pickup truck that had only nine miles on it.

"We had the motor remodeled and we are still using it. It has the same tires it had when it was new."

No human being died or was even injured by the storm. No one is sure where the tornado died, but Mr. Schneck said it still had enough power to damage a home on Ross Avenue in Wausau.

The above reminiscences indicate Town of Rib Mountain residents had some rough going in the early development of the area, but through it they became a core of self-sufficient, earnest people -- a good influence on succeeding generations.

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Clubs and Societies:

The township has many organized societies and clubs, each with its special activities and goals. Among the earlier ones are the Rib Mountain Lions Club, Rib Mountain Mothers Booster Club, PTA Council, Boy Scout Troop and Pack 453, and the Rib Mountain Boat Club.

The Lions Club was formed in 1956 and rechartered in the middle 1960s. Its first president was Arthur Lieder and its present president is Richard Roe. LeRoy Jonas Sr. has a lifetime membership in the Club, and is in fact called Mr. Lion. He and Harvey Mathwick gave a resume of the club's activities.

The basic function of the club is to help the visually handicapped. Money is donated to the Lions Camp for the Handicapped at Rosholt. The club also donated \$1,000 toward a new Rib Mountain ambulance; furnished bedrooms and some landscaping at the Zender Home for retarded children, and gave money toward several other worthy causes.

Their biggest project was gathering more than 200,000 old pairs of eye glasses that had been placed in boxes in banks and places of business. Some of the eye glasses were sent to Europe, some to South America, some to the Philippine Islands. All the eye glasses were cataloged and disbursed to needy people.

The Club meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at Valley Inn.

The Rib Mountain Mothers Booster Club began in 1952, with Mrs. Harold Fosbender the first president. Membership at first was only about 10 or 12 mothers, and they met in each others' homes. When the Rib Mountain Consolidated School was built in 1955 they met at the school, first in the teachers' lounge, and as membership grew, in one of the classrooms. In the first years of its existence Mrs. Fosbender and Melda Talcott showed movies once or twice a month in the old Town Hall.

They went to the hall in the morning and started a fire in the heater to warm up the building. Then they went home and prepared a lot of popcorn, took it back in the evening and sold it at five cents a bag to the children who came to see the movies.

"In those days the kids had no other form of entertainment in the town, so this gave them something to do," Mrs. Fosbender said.

The Rib Mountain Mothers Booster Club also started the first carnival held in the township, and one has been held every year since then. Its members prepare a dinner for the teachers about a week before school starts each year. Mrs. Fosbender said the first dinners were prepared in the janitor's

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Early photo of Marathon Paper Mill, Rothschild, built in 1909, while still under construction.

room.

Membership dinners are held semi-annually. The present president is Mrs. Charlene Lindgren, and meetings take place the third Tuesday of the month.

The first parent-teacher group consisted of a get-together at Mountainside School on the corner of Rib Mountain Road and Partridge Avenue. The township's first PTA Council, which was affiliated with the national PTA Council, was organized in 1957, with Gordon Genrich the first president. The Council was instrumental in having four more classrooms built to accommodate the increase in students.

The goals of the Rib Mountain PTA Council are to promote the welfare of children; to bring a closer relationship between home and school; to develop between educators and the general public such united efforts as will secure for every child the highest advantages in physical, mental, social and spiritual education.

Meetings are held several times a year. Serving as president in 1975-76 is Arden Hoffmann.

Rib Mountain Boy Scout Troop 453 was organized in March of 1956, and Pack 453 was organized in October of that year. Both are sponsored by the PTA. The first scoutmaster was DuWayne Borchardt, and the present scoutmaster is Ken Nielsen. Lowell Bobert was the first cubmaster, and that office is now held by Gene Laurent. Louis Moser was chairman for many years, as was Bob Andringa. The present chairman is Gordon Utecht.

Fund-raising projects include pancake suppers and chili suppers, and the troop has collected 500 tons of newspapers over the past five or six years. With the money earned from these endeavors, the boys bought equipment for and built a troop trailer.

The scouts assist in cleanup projects and help elderly people in various ways. They sponsored, built and maintained a 12-mile hiking trail in the Nine-Mile Swamp area. As many as 2,500 scouts hike on this trail each year. The trail is nationally sanctioned and is one of the best wilderness hiking trails in the United States that has been built, subsidized and maintained by one scout troop. The trail is also used by snowmobilers in the winter.

Boy Scout Troop meetings are held every Thursday in the gymnasium in the Rib Mountain School. Cub Scout Pack meetings are held every fourth Wednesday at the school.

The Rib Mountain Boat Club at one time had 200 members. Formed in about 1957, it was organized by a few people whose main objective was to pull debris out of Lake Wausau and mark the danger spots.

Membership has dwindled to about 14 or 15, with Irving Thurn the commodore. They meet once a month in members' homes. In summer the group goes on cruises on Lake Winnebago; Manitowish Waters; Land O' Lakes, and Lake Superior. They have an annual corn roast in August and a Christmas party in December.

The Rib Mountain Lionettes, a sub-



Prelude to the present day coffee break
(Photo courtesy of Frank Busko)



Lumber crew - 1913 (Photo courtesy of Frank Busko)

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siary of the Lions, was organized in March 1975. Charter president Louise Lach still holds that office in 1976. The club meets the fourth Tuesday of the month at Valley Inn.

The remaining organizations will be listed as to name, year begun, first president or leader, and meeting place, in that order.

Happy Valley Pals 4-H Club -- 1956; Mrs. Gerald Lanigan; Arden Hoffman; third Monday in members' homes.

Sundowners 4-H - 1969; Mr. & Mrs. Larry Gibson; Mrs. Hilmer Dittmar; every second Thursday at 7:00 P.M. at the Rib Mt. Town Hall.

Vignettes (homemakers) -- 1962; Mrs. Truman Tornow; Mrs. Rodrick Nelson; monthly at homes.

Junior Girl Scouts Troop 30 -- October 1964; Evelyn Wildman; Susie Soukup and Mrs. William Siewert; every Tuesday at 6:30 at Rib Mountain School.

Junior Girl Scouts Troop 203 -- February 1975; Bev Holtz; Bev Holtz and Carol Pekol; every Tuesday at 3:15 at Rib Mountain Town Hall.

Brownie Troop 195 -- January 1965; Mrs. Robert McElrath; Sandy Gilray and Shirley Schilling; every Monday at 3:15 at Rib Mountain School.

Brownie Troop 1 -- November 1968; Mrs. Arlon Parkin; Shirley Borland and Cindy Bartel; every Monday at 3:15 at Rib Mountain School.

Rib Mountain Women's Society -- November 1968; Nancy Salzman; Karen Vilender; third Tuesday afternoon at Rib Mountain Lutheran Church.

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Rib Knights Snowmobile Club -- 1971; Bill Gessner; George Geier, second Tuesday at 8 p.m. at Trail's End.

Valley Hi - Riders Snowmobile Club August 1973; John Belling; Jim Riehle; third Tuesday at Valley Inn.

TOPS Club -- September 1972; Dorothy Moerickly, Karen Cyrtmus; every Monday at 7 p.m. at Rib Mountain Town Hall.

Recreation Committee -- December 1972; co-chairman Dick Roe and Ray Kirschhoffer; Walt Cosman; second Wednesday at Rib Mountain Town Hall.

YMCA -- 1973; Nancy McLay; Barb Steinhilber; quarterly at the Hoffman House.

Little League -- 1974; Ron Boehm; Ray Baine; summer for practice and games.

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Log home of Louise Graefe's grandparents, Philip and Carolina Drumm. Snapped when Louise was a small child, held by her father, Louis Moser, with her mother holding her brother.

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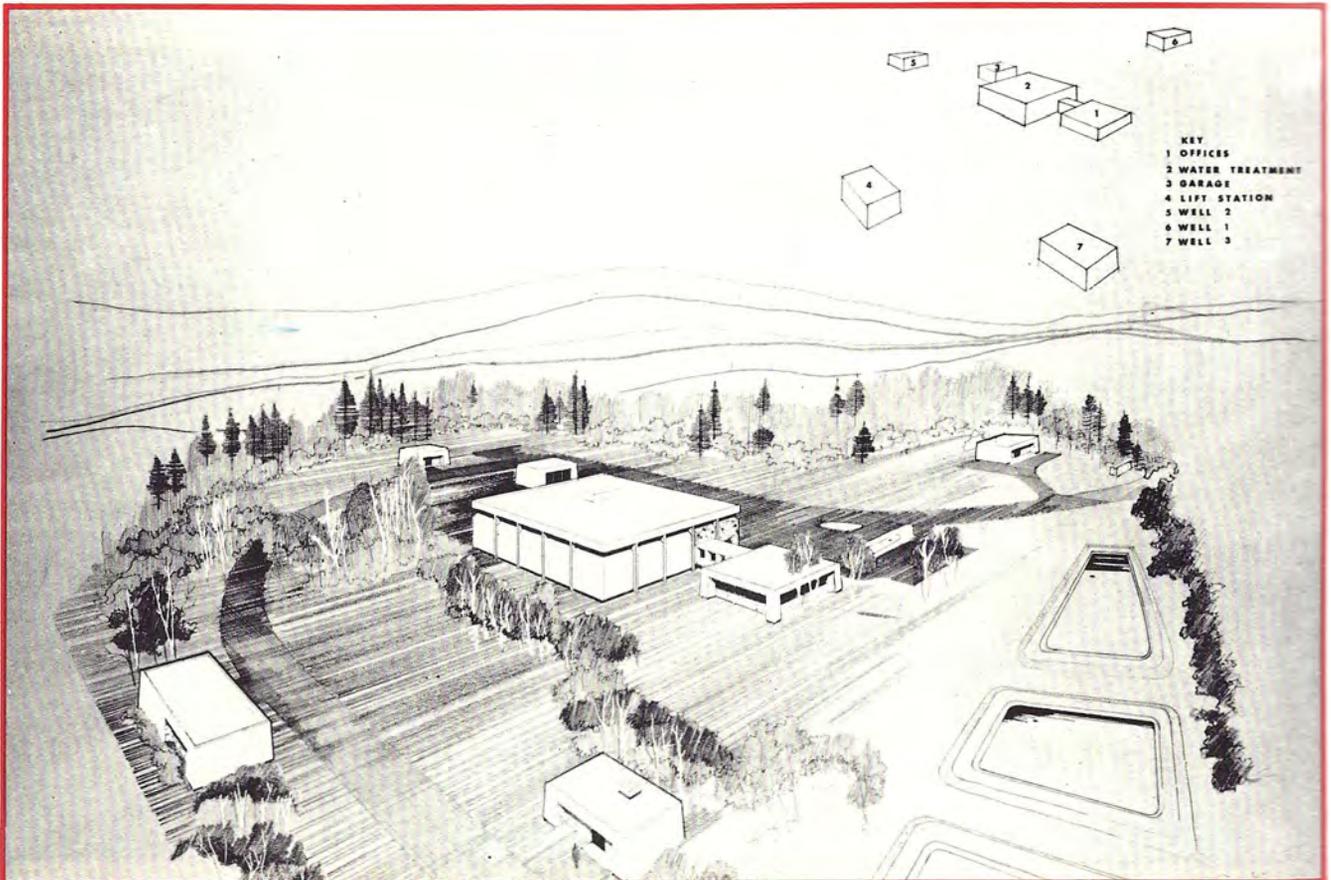
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Bicentennial Committee: Front Row: Margarete Dahlke, Louise Graefe, Della Bopf, Mildred Schaefer, Back Row: Stewart Doty, Greg Gaetzman, Greg Broukal, Missing: William A. Zachman.

IN THE SHADOW OF RIB MOUNTAIN

. . . By Della E. Bopf

In the shadow of Rib Mountain,
for centuries on end,
a forest lay untrammelled
and two rivers merged to wend
their way beside the mountain
in a pure and rippling stream.

Then lumberjacks and loggers
with courage and with brawn
encamped around the mountain,
chopped trees and skidded down
the river with their lumber.
What skill to ride those beams!

Then families came on ox-trail,
some leading an only cow.
They dynamited stump roots
for the land that they must plow --
with neighbor helping neighbor,
till all the work was done.

Then somebody discovered
Rib Mountain's quartzite mines:
the rock that through the ages
had developed wavy lines.
Geologists have written
of that phenomenon.

But now our mountain beckons
for us to come and ski
in winter, hike in summer,
golf and picnic too.
And for those who climb the mountain,
there's a most delightful view.

Like a giant guardian angel
with a great protecting arm,
Rib Mountain shelters, keeps us
in its shadow, safe from harm;
an age-old sentinel, warding
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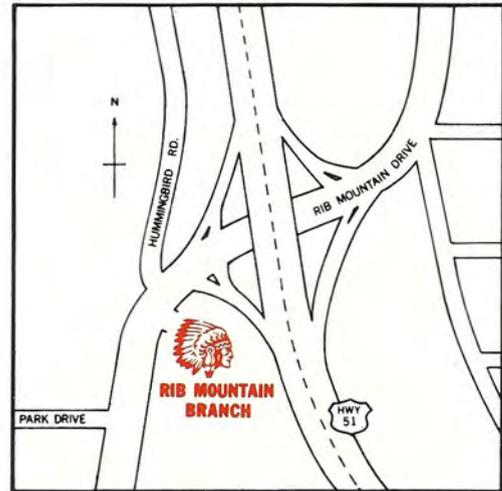
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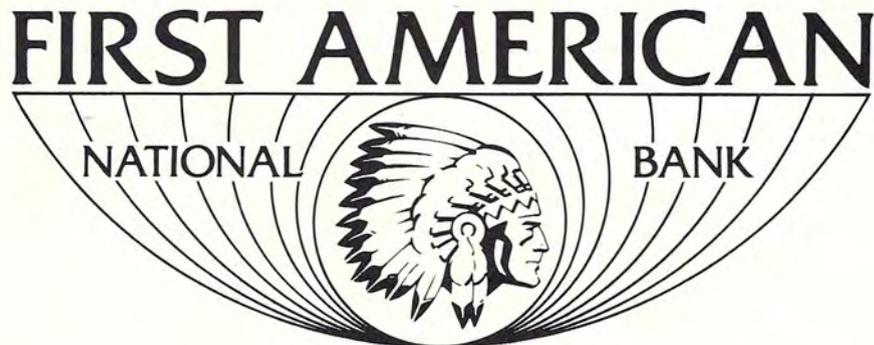
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