

# Historical Clippings

Three Lakes Museum

September 2023

The Museum staff just has to mention an exciting museum Happening! On the list of summer projects, the Visitor Center exhibit area was finally completed with the installation of the display board above the artifact case. Now the rotating displays can easily be changed without damage to the wall. Thanks to those involved in making this happen!

This month's *Clipping*, another in the series of the **Superior Street Project**, is based on the current display in the Visitor Center. While you can read about the history of the bank here, you will have to stop in to see the "modern", recently donated, money counting machines bank tellers once used.

## *It's Always Been a Bank* 1784 Superior Street



1912

Clark G. Kuey opened the State Bank of Three Lakes on November 6, 1912 with capital of \$10,000 which increased to \$25,000 by July 25, 1918. Kuey and his relatives and business associates continued to do business until April 2, 1923, when the bank was closed by order of the state banking commissioner who found that it had accumulated too much "frozen paper" or frozen assets.



1920

*"The direct cause of the closing of this bank is the result of the former management which was of the one-man type making excessive loans to various enterprises in which he (Kuey) was personally interested."*

The Capital Times (Madison, Wisconsin) 04 Apr 1923, p9



1968

This may have indicated suspicious illegal activity but Kuey was acquitted of all charges in a jury trial.

The closed State Bank was reorganized as People's State Bank and was chartered in August of 1923. Fred H. Dobbs, who also owned a general merchandise and grocery business, had substantial land holdings, and owned a local hardware store and resort cottages in the area, was named bank president.

The original bank reorganization papers, on display in the exhibit, were signed by many other notable, recognizable Three Lakes businessmen.



1992

A bank has always occupied the location of the current bank at 1784 Superior Street since 1912.

Maybe not as headline grabbing as Bonnie and Clyde, Three Lakes still made the news with a bank robbery as told by Ed Epler in *Eighty Years in God's Country*

Burt Louk, the Three Lakes town constable in the 1920's, also owned a taxi service. One day he drove a man several places in the morning and was supposed to meet him in front of the bank at one o'clock for a ride to Rhinelander.

Unbeknownst to Burt, the man had just robbed the bank and locked the young cashier, Harry Olkowski, in the vault. A device had been installed on the vault door to hold it open about three inches and Harry kept a rifle in there, but since Harry knew the robber, he felt they could catch him without a shooting.

When Burt got home from delivering the man to Rhinelander, Harry told him what had happened at the bank. Notifying the authorities, the bank robber was caught at the Rhinelander depot waiting for the southbound train - right where Burt had left him!

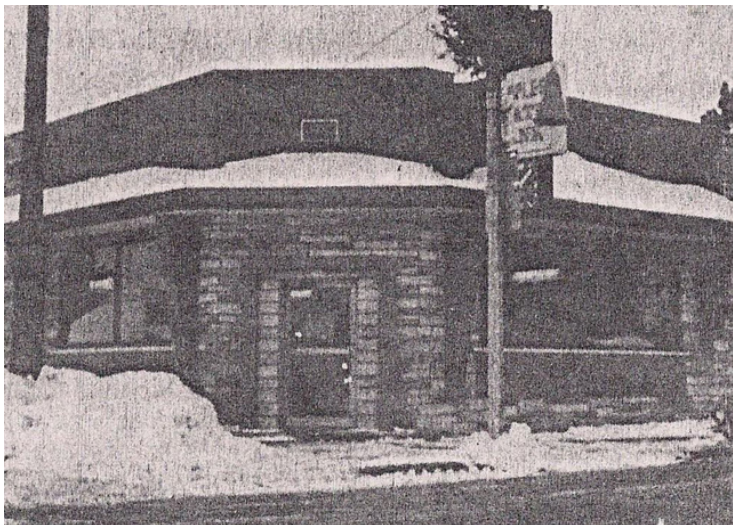
**Burt Louk appears in many pages of Three Lakes history and wore many hats -**

Born in 1867, Burt came to Three Lakes as a child. From 1886-1895 he was a guide on the lakes and in the woods for hunters and fishermen. He married Minnie Bender of Three Lakes in 1890 and they raised a family here.

In 1895, Burt ran a livery service. First with a horse and wagon and later a Maxwell automobile.

He owned a 22-foot launch holding 10 passengers which was used for pleasure parties on the entire chain of 27 lakes. Because of his knowledge of the area, 1912 found him in real estate.

Burt also owned a 40 acre seed potato farm, was deputy sheriff of Oneida County and Director of Peoples State Bank in the years 1911-1912.



Does anyone remember this ?

