Outagamie County's thousands of citizens, springing from a dozen different strains of the same sturdy pioneer stock that built Wisconsin to national pre-eminence, celebrated the centennial of their state during the gala week beginning May 22, 1948.

It was more than merely the anniversary of statehood. It was a tribute to the Wisconsinites now gone, who built fine communities out of the forests and found time to sing, too. Without their industry, high ideals, spiritual strength and moral courage the rich natural resources we enjoy here would have been of little avail. One of the primary purposes of the centennial celebration was to review and reaffirm our faith in our American institutions and ideals and in our standard of living—all of which have amply demonstrated that our system of government has contributed much toward our advancement.

The week's celebration was only part of the story. All through the year, but particularly in the golden summer weeks, thoughts turned backwards a century and more, as national groups marked the anniversary of their arrivals in the area.

Objectives of the Outagamie County centennial celebration were broader than the weeks of pageantry, of concerts, of parades and picnics would have indicated on the surface. There were long-range aims, too.

First, the centennial committee, under the dynamic leadership of State Senator Gordon A. Bubolz, sought to nourish that feeling of 'one-ness' which makes a tight, neighborly unit of a great county, which ties that county even more closely with its parent state.

Then, the committee worked to preserve the antiques and relics crowding every garret and store room which served to make Outagamie County's past a living story to its citizens of today.

Thirdly, the county committee gathered up the odds and ends of county history into a coordinated whole which would tell the Outagamie story to readers of the future.

Closely associated with every year of Outagamie County's history has been the
peculiar predilection of its citizens toward music. Thus, music ranging from the plaintive wail of the old time fiddle to the massed melodies of a symphony orchestra and the full notes of a world-famous contralto marked the week-long spring celebration.

Four separate musical evenings were centennial highlights. First, came the May 23 concert in which Appleton’s own Helen Ornstein Beatty, Percy and Nettie Fullinwider, LaVahn K. Maesch and Winifred Bell Lindberg joined forces for vocal, violin, organ and piano melodies. The contralto interpretations of Scarlatti, and Brahms symbolically rubbed shoulders with the Maesch organ masterpieces, while the Fullinwiders, beloved Appleton musical couple, chose “Rocky Mountain Sketches” for their contributions. Mrs. Lindberg’s Chopin and MacDowell items wound up the program in a keyboard blaze of technical and emotional proficiency.

For the May 25 musical evening the MacDowell Men’s and the Chaminade Women’s Choruses of Appleton presented a combined program before a packed house. And the next evening the Valley Symphony orchestra, drawing its membership from students and businessmen alike, thrilled another capacity audience. Finally, on May 28, as a study in contrasts, a dual program attracted still another full house. The Oneida Indian Choir shared the stage with top-ranking Barber Shop Quartets to prove that red or white-skinned, in the nineteenth or the twentieth century, Outagamie County goes for music, and in a big way.

The opening for the entire week of celebration was a massed concert by bands from Seymour, Kaukauna, Kimberly, Hortonville and Appleton playing under the baton of E. C. Moore of Lawrence College and Appleton Public Schools. This was offered on the tree-shaded outdoor stage at Pierce Park the first day of the celebration.

Meanwhile, old-timers were having their day. On Monday evening, May 24, ladies and gentlemen pushing 90 years—Outagamie County’s pioneers—gathered for their own special event: a pioneer banquet at the Conway Hotel. Thready sopranos trilled along on “Silver Threads Among the Gold” and there were rows upon rows of silver heads nodding in time to the music; Circuit Judge Michael G. Eberlein reminisced about his own early days; and the Outagamie Pioneer and Historical Society saw to it that every pioneer got a lapel pin and hearty shake of the hand for his part in building the community.

Even rural school youngsters had a part in the centennial celebration. On Thursday, May 28, urban pursuits took a back street while country eighth-graders held a special centennial graduation ceremony. They’ll remember it all their lives. Judge D. M. Gleason, Green Bay, was the graduation speaker.

Even the weatherman pulled out all the stops to provide a perfect setting for Rural Day Saturday, May 29. While a warm sun testified that spring had come for sure, farm families—mothers and dads and all the kids, plus a lot of family pooches who came along for the ride—gathered at Pierce Park. There was old-time music; there were magic tricks; there
Valley Symphony Orchestra, Milton C. Rusch, Milwaukee, director.

Combined School Chorus of Appleton under Miss Marian Gerlach, director.

Oneida Indian Choir—left to right they are, back row: Fred Cornelius, Cornelius Hill, Cornelius Baird, Ernest Smith, and Cyrenius Smith. Middle row: Rev. Frank Christian, Mrs. Leah Cornelius, Miss Rena Baird, Mrs. Ben. Green, Mrs. Raymond King, and Mrs. Walter House, organist. Third row: Marilyn Doxtator; Mrs. Blanche McLester, Mrs. Cornelius Baird. Front row: Miss Loretta House, Miss Charlene Smith, Mrs. Alfred Danforth and Mrs. Cyrenius Smith.
Chaminade and MacDowell choruses, A. A. Glockzin, director.

Barbershop Quartet, Edwin Zordell, director.

Third graders, Edison School, Appleton, in "Songs of Hiawatha."
was a recognition ceremony for owners of century farms.

Finally, the grand climax: the tremendous "Century of Progress on Wheels," the Saturday afternoon centennial parade that moved majestically the full length of College Avenue. The length and breadth of the city banners fluttered in the wind, prominent among them the 30-star flag testifying to Wisconsin's admission to statehood.

But that wasn't all. An Indian band from Keshena played in the centennial parade, adding its part of picturesque Wisconsin past to the modern historic panorama. The Oneida Indian home-coming a few weeks later at the reservation taught lots of people who never heard of it about the native game of la crosse, attracted thousands to see the ancient tribal and ceremonial dances highlighting the gathering of Indians from all over the country.

College Avenue was transformed into a veritable museum, from the east to the west end, as hundreds of cooperating business places turned over their display windows to relics of the past. There were old time costumes, elderly washing machines, crank-type telephones and primitive phonographs, priceless old china, silver rubbed to velvety smoothness—all the articles and objects of a day gone by that made history vivid.

In the same manner the centennial museum, operated for five days at Castle Hall, turned the spotlight on the last century.

But there was even more. Much more. For instance, Joan Beringer, Milwaukee artist, brought her nationally famous collection of hand-made figurines to Appleton for a lecture on prominent women in Wisconsin's past.

National groups organized special festivities for the week. Of particular interest and success was the "Smorgasbord" held at Pierce Park, at which food delicacies handed down to Outagamie County residents by their north country ancestors loaded the picnic tables. This program of
food and folk dancing climaxed the county Scandinavian’s centennial celebration on Saturday, May 29.

Little Chute, too, dived into trunks for old-time Dutch costumes and came up with a four-day celebration.

This program was more than a state centennial observance, for the villagers were paying tribute to three of their beloved citizens—one a pioneer of more than 100 years ago, the Rev. Theodore Van den Broek, and two present day members of the village, the Rt. Rev. Msgr. J. J. Sprangers and Dr. J. H. Doyle, Sr.

The year 1948 marks the centennial of the coming of the first boatload of Hollanders to Little Chute under Father Van den Broek, the Jubilarian year in the priesthood for Father Sprangers and the fiftieth year of medical practice in the community for Dr. Doyle.

Opening their celebrations with the unique, Dutch Kermis dance on June 24, the villagers whirled gayly in traditional Dutch folk dances, listened to Dutch music and heard addresses by village personalities. Highlight of the day was the centennial address by Dr. J. B. van de Mortel, Consul General of the Netherlands.

On June 25 a Solemn High Mass paid tribute to the memory of the Rev. Van den Broek. Picnics, an aerial circus, concerts and street parades climaxed the final two days of the Little Chute event.

Kaukauna, a step farther down the Fox River, opened its centennial celebration July 15 with a mammoth street parade. Following the parade, thousands of spectators crowded onto the high school athletic field to witness the opening performance of "Tale of the Fox," the gigantic pageant depicting the history of Outagamie County. More than 500 county citizens, wearing authentic costumes, trooped across a 250-foot outdoor stage to re-enact famous events in the county’s history. The colorful pageant of Indians, missionaries, fur traders, settlers and government luminaries played in 17 episodes.
County pioneers honored at Centennial Pioneer Banquet.

Seated, left to right: Mrs. Marianne Thompson, Mrs. Frank X. Bessette, Mark Baumgartner, Mrs. Peter Hanson, Mrs. Henry Hausey, Mrs. George Schiedermayer, Mrs. D. H. Gurnee, Mrs. Margaret O Leary, Sophie M. Schaefer, Mrs. Hattie Krull, Bridget Garvey, Mrs. Hattie Graham. Standing, left to right: Wenzel Blanik, Fred Mueller, John Schroeder, Charles A. Feuerstein, Stanislaus F. Lisbeth, Charles Specht, James W. Black, John Klues, Anton Nickash, Otto Thiessenhusen, P. J. Vaughn, John Schuh, Miles Meidam, Julius Bubolz, W. J. Konrad, Sr., August Wende, Robert Kuehn, William Lyons.

Seated, left to right: Mrs. H. Lecker, Mrs. Mike Griesbach, Mrs. M. Weber, Mrs. Carrel Raprager, Mrs. Charles Roesler, Mrs. August Wirth, Mrs. Nancy Bullinger, Mrs. R. F. Pasch, Mr. R. F. Pasch, Mrs. Annie Delrow, Herman Wiese, Mrs. Lillie Johnson, Herman Ruescher. Standing, left to right: Frances Bauer, James Bley, John Bauer, Michael Schmid, Mike Griesbach, Lizzie Rupple, Cassie Bottenske, Robert Reinke, John Engerson, Bernard Greese, Carrie Morgan, Mrs. J. J. Taylor, David Horkman, William Rohde, William Mews, Fred Wolter, Dr. E. G. Ellsworth, Frank Richardson, Gottlieb Ziegler.

Seated, left to right: Mrs. Agnes Weiss, Mrs. H. C. Greeley, Mrs. Olive Spencer, Mrs. William Bunkelman, Mrs. Eva M. Gengler, Theresa A. Simpson, Mrs. Anna Stapel. Standing, left to right: Mr. W. Rahlow, J. F. J. Schwalbach, Charles Kittner, L. E. Vandenberq.
Little Chute Centennial Committee—Anton "Casey" Jansen, village burgomeister; A. P. Rock, construction; Ernest R. Miron, General Chairman of 48'ers; Willard Van Handel, publicity and program; Henry Verbruggen, songster. Standing: George Van Der Loop, newspaper publicity; Frank Hermsen, Jr., parade marshal assistant; Mod Lammers, Legion Post Commander, Jacob Coppus 258; Peter C. VanDenHuevel, concessions, Frank Hermsen, Sr., parade marshal.

Dutch girls in traditional Kermis dance—front, left to right: Donna Van Den Heuvel and Mitzi Van Handel. Back row, left to right: Lee Ann Wynboon, Marylyn Jansen, Carol Van Lankvelt, Mary Lamers, Joan Van Hoof and Helen Hietpas.


Float in Kaukauna parade depicts purchase of Kaukauna for two barrels of rum.

"Sweeping the Streets" in Little Chute Parade.

Scene from "Tale of the Fox" Pageant shows Father Vanden Broek teaching Indian children.
before huge audiences that sat in darkness before the arena.

Two Kaukauna citizens were awarded special recognition of their contributions to the growth and development of the city at the July 16 performance. They were 92-year-old civic leader, H. S. Cooke and Joseph G. McCarty, long active in Valley Boy Scout and other youth movements.

Miss Joan Leddy, Kaukauna, won the title from among 12 county girls as “Miss Outagamie,” winning as her prize an all-expense trip to Hollywood.

Kaukauna youngsters had their big day, too. Contestants in a baby parade vied for titles as Junior King and Queen of the historical pageant. Some 40 boys and girls staged the most hilarious event of the entire celebration when they competed for prizes in a pie-eating contest.

Open house on the lawn of the Grignon mansion was another of the city’s centennial highlights. Other important events included a coronation ball, an old-timer’s
ball game and a carnival midway. Official centennial hats were worn on the streets and wooden money was accepted as legal tender throughout the city during the celebration.

Late in August the County Fair at Seymour was built around the 100-year old theme. Special recognition was given to present owners of century old homesteads which have remained in the same family through the years.

These century old homesteads include the farms of Merle Matthew Culbertson and the Jamison family in the Town of Greenville. Harvey Blue in the Town of Dale, Mrs. Robert Simpson in the Town of Osborn and the Appleton home of Abraham Lewenstein.

Five acres of the Hippolyte Grignon homestead, now in Appleton, dates back to 1835. Today, Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lewenstein live there with their son, Simon. Mrs. Lewenstein, Marcelline Grignon Lewenstein, is the great granddaughter of Hippolyte.

The Simpson farm is the oldest century farm on record, going back to a U. S. land patent of 1840. Mrs. Robert Simpson, the present owner, lives there with her son, Julius B. Simpson. She is the widow of Robert Simpson, one of the four sons of the Glasgow-born James Simpson, who came to his homestead before there was a Town of Osborn.

April 14, 1848, is the date of the two Culbertson homesteads in the Town of Greenville. John Culbertson and his son, Matthew, purchased the property. Merle Matthew Culbertson lives with his wife and two children, Ray Merle and Sandra Kay, on the Matthew Culbertson homestead. He is the son of the late Henry Culbertson, and grandson of Matthew. The Jamison farm in section 20 was purchased by John Culbertson for his son, James. The present owners who reside there are Alice, Harvey, Clarence and Stanley Jamison whose parents were Ella Culbertson Jamison and William Garrett Jamison. Ella Culbertson was the daughter of James Culbertson.

Harvey Blue lives on the original Joseph Scribner homestead which goes back in 1848. Mr. Blue claims a relationship to Scribner through his grandfather, Harvey Blue, who took over the farm in July 1851 from Sannus Parsons.

Thus it went—the Centennial summer—with recognition, fun and pride all going along together. A greater appreciation of the county in which they live, the historic Fox River Valley and the great state now entering its second century—that was the product of months of planning by hundreds of participating county residents.