



This is a

**Menasha History**

Change Over Time

**RESOURCE**

## Teacher Guide

# City Departments Help Menasha

### **Fire Protection:**

**Image 1:** Fire Station built in 1886; photographed in 1983.

Other city departments moved out of the joint city hall/fire station as the Fire Department grew.

Image ID#mpl\_00556

**Image 1.5** Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue Station No. 35, First Street, 2007.

The current downtown fire station was dedicated Sept. 1979

Image ID#mmfirestation

**Image 2:** Interior of fire station.

This is the east bay of the city hall/fire station. The slanted wall at the left over the steamer is where the stairs go up to the council chamber. Unfortunately we have no date for this photo, but the style of clothing indicates it is much later than the others. The fire department did not become motorized until 1921.

Image ID # menashafiredept

**Image 3:** Horse drawn fire engine, 1893-1898.

Mr. Ponkratz is the driver. Taken on Main Street at the corner of Racine.

Image ID # mplss1214

**Image 4:** Fire Department members with horse-drawn steam engine.

Fire Department members in front of City Hall/Fire Station

Members of the fire department lined up in front of City Hall. The first floor was the fire department; upstairs was the City Council chamber. The equipment at left is a hose cart; at right is the steam pumper which pumped the water through the hoses. Probably taken in 1887.

Image ID # mplss1113

**Image 5:** Fire Company No. 1, June 7, 1856, Menasha Advocate.

This is an all-volunteer department.

Image ID # fireengine1856\_06\_07

**Image 6:** Fire Engine, June 21, 1856, Menasha Advocate.

The first fire engine was a hand-pumped engine purchased second hand.

Image ID # fireengine1856\_06\_21

**Image 7.** Went up in Smoke, Sept. 27, 1890, Menasha Press.

The four buildings which burned were on the south side of Main, starting at Racine. They are on the 1884 map numbered 646-649 Main. New construction shows on 1900 map. The re-opening of one store is announced in item 8.

Image ID # /fire1890\_09\_27

**Image 8:** Risen from the Ashes, Nov. 15, 1890 Menasha Press.

Announces re-opening of store destroyed in item 1. Students may understand phoenix from the Harry Potter books

Image ID # Risen1890\_1

**Image 9:** Fire Department Helps Decorate for Christmas, ca 1950s

Fire fighters practice climbing ladders by hanging Christmas lights on Main Street, late 1950s or early 1960s.

Image ID # xmasdecorations12\_1\_195

## **Public Works**

### **Streets**

Images take the street from mud through the first concrete paving and more recent re-paving.

**Image 1:** Tayco St. at Main St., 1871.

At left is Landgraf hotel. Building with bell in cupola is [fire] engine house no. 1, used until 1886. White building in the distance is St. Patrick's. Compare to birds-eye map.

Image ID#:menasha1871

**Image 2:** Paving Main Street with concrete, May-June 1910.

Prior to this time Main Street was paved with cedar blocks, with a thin layer of dirt on top to provide a cushion. Thus it might be muddy, but not so deeply that it hindered traffic. The concrete paving was a matter of pride to the citizens. A major effort was made to have the work finished by the time of the Elks State Convention here in June 1910.

Image ID#:mpl\_0061

**Image 3:** Paving the square, May-June 1910.

This photo was taken at the same time as Image 2. Note the Vaudette motion picture theater. At this time movies were silent and not more than 15-20 minutes long.

Image ID#:repairingstreetatmilwaukee

**Image 4:** Repaving Main Street , circa 1948.

Signs include Hidde Rexall Drugs, BPOE 675, Ace Bar and Model Bakery.

Image ID#:repavingeastendofmainstreet

**Image 5:** Repaving Racine Street, 1981.

Image ID#:/mpl\_00199

**Image 6:** Nicolet Avenue paving article, April 10, 1913, Menasha Record.

Image ID#:NicoletPaving\_1913\_04\_10

## **Sidewalks**

Each property owner was responsible for the upkeep of the sidewalk. Sidewalks were a step or two above the street to keep mud from being splashed onto them.

**Image 7:** Wooden sidewalk in front of Planner Building, Main St. .

Image ID#:plannerbuildingnorthofmain

**Image 8:** Milwaukee Street sidewalk ordinance with map, 1879.

Image ID#: page6streetbookAmod

**Image 9:** First Street sidewalk ordinance with map, 1879.

Image ID#: page7streetbookAmod

## **Street Lights 10-13**

**Image 10:** Electric Street Lights turned on, Dec 14, 1895, Menasha Press.

Electric lights were considered more up-to-date.

Image ID#:GasLights1895\_12\_14

**Image 11:** Gas Light schedule, May 1885.

Image ID#: lightingmay

**Image 12:** Gas Light schedule Dec. 1885.

The two gas light schedules show times of lighting and extinction. Lighting time appears to be quite scheduled, getting later as the days grow longer in May. 5:00 and 5:15 lighting in December compares to 7:30 and 7:45 in May At the right edge of that column, N.M., F. Q., F.M., etc indicate the phases of the moon. When the moon provided light, the city economized by not lighting the lamps.

Image ID#: lightingdecember

**Image 13:** Arched lights across upper Main St., June 1910.

The arches of lights were authorized and installed in spring 1910; removed in late summer 1926. This photo shows decorations welcoming the state convention of the Elks in June 1910.

Image ID#:mpl\_0062

**Image 14:** Arched lights at night.

You can read Schultz Bros. drug stores tel. 2383 on sign at left.

Image ID#: streetlightsmainlookwest

**Image 15:** Arched lights at night, color postcard.

Taken after August 1915 when jeweler O. Swenson installed the street clock visible at left. The sign above the clock is for Wells Fargo Express service.

Image ID#:mainstreetatnigh

## **Bridges**

**Image 16:** Mill Street Bridge, 1892.

This bridge was built in 1870. The City Hall tower and the National Hotel are visible.

Image ID#:bridgebuilt1870

**Image 17:** Washington St. Bridge, 1886-7.

St. Patrick's Church is visible at left. The small building would be the bridge tender's office.

Image ID#:mpl\_00229

## **Public Library**

**Image 1:** Elisha D. Smith Public Library, Mill Street.

Cornerstone laid in spring 1898; opened in October. From its organization in 1896 to that time, the library was housed in rooms on the second floor of the Tuchscherer dry goods block. Elisha D. Smith, who owned the Menasha Wooden Ware Company, gave the money for the library building. This building was replaced by the library on First Street in 1969.

Image ID#: mplss3132

**Image 2:** Interior of Public Library, children's area.

Before the Public Library, there were reading clubs which bought books and took turns reading them. All of these were for adults. With a building and municipal support, a children's section was possible.

Image ID#: mplss3233

**Image 3:** Meeting room at Public Library.

Clubs of all kinds—fraternal, religious, social and educational—were very popular in the days before radio and television. Many of them, particularly the women's educational groups, met at the library. The statues are copies of famous classical works. They include the Winged Victory of Samothrace at right, and Artemis the Huntress at left. Both originals are in the Louvre.

Image ID#: mplss3334

**Image 4:** Library will have books in German and Polish, July 24, 1896, Menasha Evening Breeze.

Although there were reading clubs organized by immigrants, the books generally had to be shipped further and therefore cost more. The Public Library recognized this need, too.

Image ID#: GerPolish\_books\_1896