



Richfield Historical Society
 Box 268
 Richfield, WI 53076
 richfieldhistoricalsociety.org

Officers

President	Vice President	Recording Secretary	Corresponding Secretary	Treasurer	Past President
Del Schmechel	Diane Pedersen	Jane Kyle	Dawn Mueller	Lois Hessenauer	Jim Metzger

Directors

Frank Buzz ⁴ Carr	Norm Grier	Pete Samson	Dale Smith
------------------------------	------------	-------------	------------

Committees

- Blacksmith Shop*
Kathy Lauenstein
- Collections*
Jean Happel/Norb Berres
- Education*
Kathy Weberg
- Event Coordinator*
Daryl Grier
- Historic Sites*
Quint Mueller
- Library/Program/
Newsletter Editor*
Marge Holzbog
- Lillicrapp House*
Aerona Smith
- Long-Term Planning*
Jim Metzger
- Marketing*
Diane Pedersen
- Membership*
Warren Wiedmeyer
- Mill House*
Clara Birkel/
Cindy Schmechel
- Mill Restoration*
Harry Niemann
- Pioneer Homestead*
Susan Sawdey
- Project Coordinator*
Del Schmechel
- Volunteer Coordinator*
Sharon Lofy

Spring 2018 V21N1

RALPH & DOROTHY KAUTH KOHL by Carol Wolf Kohl

Ralph Kohl was born on June 15, 1923 to Peter W. Kohl and Cora Baumgartner. He had 2 brothers and 4 sisters: Doris (Ralph) Kuepper, Jean (Clyde) Dhein, Rita (Teddy) Hennes, Irma Kohl, Peter Jr. (died as an infant) and Joseph M. (Carol M.) Kohl. He was raised on the family farm which was located on 200 acres east of Richfield on Highway 41 between Pleasant Hill Road and Holy Hill Road. (Highway 167 West).

Ralph's wife, Dorothy, was born on September 22, 1925 in Rockfield, Wisconsin to Joseph Kauth and Anna Bausch. She had 2 brothers – Vernon (Marion Felsing) and Ardell (Rita Leffingwell). The Kauth 200-acre farm was on Bonniwell Road in Rockfield where they had a dairy farm and over the years raised as many as 42,000 cows.

Ralph and Dorothy first went out together on a double date with Vernon and his girlfriend Marion to the Washington County Fair. Ralph asked Dorothy to marry him when they were sitting in his car at the Rockfield School. And, he loved her response when she said "Ohhh Yes! Yes! Yes!" He then married the love of his life on November 9, 1946. They first lived in Herb Mantz's house and then moved to the Stuesser farm on the corner of Pleasant Hill Road and Highway 175.



Ralph & Dorothy Kauth Kohl

Ralph continued to work on the homestead farm with his dad, Pete, and his brother Joe. Soon after, he bought his own farm on Bonniwell Road in Richfield. Joe and Carol bought the family farm, and they worked both farms plus around 500 more acres from surrounding farms.

With the help of Joe's children, all the in-laws, nephews and nieces and other friends; they managed to raise the usual crops of hay, oats and corn for the cattle, plus other cash crops including sweet corn, peas, soybeans, cabbage, carrots and a whole lot of red beets. Ralph retired from farming around the turn of the 20th century. Dorothy passed away on July 28, 2014. Ralph, at the age of 94 years and in failing health, passed away April 16, 2018.

Ralph was a lifetime member of the RHS, served on our board from 2003-2005 and was a generous contributor to the Mill Foundation Fund. We are saddened to hear of his recent passing. Ralph and his wife, Dorothy, will surely be remembered for their wonderful friendship and for the warm and loving people they truly have always been.

ED & BURDELLA "BURP" KEELER STUESSER

Cornelius Stuesser, (Great Grandfather of Ed Stuesser and a German capitalist) settled in Richfield in September 1842 purchasing 200 acres in Section 1 in the Town of Richfield. He was the son of Francis Joseph and Elizabeth Stuesser of Rheinland, Germany. Cornelius came to America with his parents as a child. On June 8, 1851, he married Mary Landgraf, born in Germany and daughter of Henry Landgraf. Cornelius and Mary had six children: Rosa Theresa (George Schwalbach), Elizabeth (Peter Wolf), Joseph, John, Mary and Christian. Their youngest son, Christian and Grandfather to Ed, married Maria Schottler. They had eight children - 6 boys and 2 girls namely: Anna, Cornelius (there were 2 of the same name - the first Cornelius died, and another son was born and christened with the same name); Martin, Eugene (Ed's Dad), Raymond, Christian, and Mary (Mae). Son number four, Eugene, was born December 10, 1890. His first wife Rosie Wolf Friess died in 1914 and second wife, mother of Ed, was Ella Wolf Friess.

Ed's wife Burdella, known as Burp, was a Keeler from Menomonee Falls and had never worked on a farm. Burp and her cousin had worked at the Rockfield Canning Factory where peas were canned. She performed office work including shorthand, typing and other office duties.

After high school, Ed attended school in Madison where he took County Agricultural Agent courses. His parents, Eugene and Ella, were divorced; Mom got the family and the farm - and Dad got stocks, bonds, etc. A hired man helped out on the Stuesser farm while Ed was away at school in Madison, but Ed came home every weekend. Ed and Burdella met at the wedding dance of her sister Jean at the Nightingale Ballroom. Ed had come to the dance with Billy Schulteis. Later in the evening Ed and Burp danced - and the rest is history.

Ed and Burp farmed the family farm in Section 1 Richfield Township. They cash-cropped peas and corn for the Rockfield Canning Factory, and red beets went to Libby's in Hartford. Later on, they also raised sugar beets which were taken south to the town of Calhoun, near New Berlin in Waukesha County. Jake Lenhardt instructed Ed how to drive from Menomonee Falls to Calhoun where the sugar beets were being deposited. Burp's dad had also raised them. The Ebling brothers, Albert and Elmer, had a harvester that went from farm to farm to harvest the beets.

The Stuesser herd consisted of 25-30 Holstein cows. It was one of the "prize" herds in Washington County. Prize herd cattle were the high milk producers; they were pure bred cattle, and not everyone had them. (Other large herds were owned by the Horlamus Brothers near West Bend and by Christ Mayer in Slinger.) The Stuesser's nine children (Richard, James, Gary, Jane, Mary, Mark, Gail, Connie and Brian) helped with the milking. At times, Ed would exchange bulls with Horlamus, as well as a farmer in Fond du Lac, in order to strengthen the blood line and milk production of his herd.

The Stuesser residence today is located on East Pleasant Hill Road. The lot has sandy soil (possibly an old sand pit) and is not good for planting; so they planted pine trees instead. Burp was in charge of overseeing the building process of their residence since Ed was out working during the days. John Achenreiner was the builder.

Ed Stuesser and his wife Burp were involved in many activities in Richfield over the years. Please see their full interview complete with many of Ed's stories in the coming issue of "Downtown Richfield - Part 1" which will be available at this year's Thresheree and Harvest festival at the Welcome Center.



Eugene and Ella Stuesser

The last 50 years in the Mill House -- The 1930s to the 1970s – Linda Derrick

This is the fourth and final article about the families of the Mill House. Their stories began over 150 years ago when they left Germany to start a new life in America. The Messer family came to Richfield, built the saw mill and the grist mill, worked hard, raised a family and prospered in their new homeland. After Andrew Messer's fatal accident, the property was purchased by Johann Mayer (uncle to Andrew) and continued in the Mayer family for almost a century. This last article continues the life of the Mayer family from the 1930s to the 1970s.

The year is 1930. George Mayer and his brother Charles have been running the Saw Mill and the Grist Mill since the death of their father 13 years earlier. But in the past several years, the need for lumber and changing technology has impacted the lumber business. After more than 60 years of operation, the Sawmill was no longer prosperous. George and Charles decide to cease operation. For many years their lumber cutting business had served the community well, especially in the beginning when families were immigrating to the area needing lumber cut to build their homesteads. With the Saw Mill closed, just the Grist Mill remains.

1930 is also about the time that electricity comes to the Grist Mill and the Mill House. For close to 60 years, oil lamps and candles were the only source of light in the Mill House. Now, all they had to do was press a button on the wall, and electric lights illuminated the room.

Two more years go by and Charles is now 33 years old. He was just a teenager when he partnered with his brother George in 1917 to operate both mills. Now it's 1932, and Charles decides it is time to sell his share of the Grist Mill to George. He marries and moves to Hartford. George is now the sole operator of the Grist Mill.

At this point there are five members of the Mayer family living in the Mill House: George's mother (Mary Anna), George and his wife Martha, as well as their two children, Vern and Carol.

For Carol and Vern, growing up in the Mill House during the 1930s and into the 1940s is a good childhood. Their summers are filled with warm days spent playing outdoors. They swim in the mill pond and play with the children who accompany their fathers to process grain at the Grist Mill. School is just one mile away and an easy walk south through the fields and over the Cooney Creek to the corner of Highways 167 and 164. When school is over, they walk home the same way. But, the highlight of the walk home is when their father George meets them half way with the horse and wagon to give them a ride.

Even the colder weather brings excitement for the children because soon it will be Christmas. December means cutting down a Christmas tree and putting it up in the parlor. The Christmas decorations come out, and Grandma (Mary Anna) and Mother Martha are busy preparing for Christmas. This is when Grandma closes the parlor doors so the kids couldn't see what she was doing. For young Carol, curiosity gets the best of her one day. She tries peeking through the key hole of the parlor door hoping to see what kind of presents Grandma is wrapping. Carol is caught spying, and the next time she tries sneaking a peek she finds Grandma has stuffed cotton in the key hole.

As winter progresses, the mornings get pretty cold even inside the house. When it is really cold outside, not much of the heat from the kitchen's wood-burning cook stove reaches the bedrooms upstairs. Some winter mornings the temperature upstairs is in the 30s, and the children find it hard to climb out from under the warm feather-tick quilts that cover their beds.

As Carol and Vern got older, it is expected that they help with chores. One of Carol's chores is to make butter in the butter churn. She has to crank the handle again and again until the cream turns to butter. However, the sweet taste of fresh butter on Mom's warm homemade bread makes it all worth the effort. Carol also helps with gardening, baking and canning. Vern helps with farm chores, cutting wood and butchering.

Modern technology is leading to more efficient and better ways to process the grain used for human consumption. A new decade arrives, and the 1940s bring change. Vern is a young man, and he leaves home to join the Navy. The Grist Mill business is declining. Although it has been operated by electric motors for the past 10 years, the Grist Mill is now only grinding corn for cattle feed. With each year that passes, business keeps dropping.

By the 1950s, the Grist Mill ceases operation. It stands silent for the first time in almost 90 years. George closes the door to the Grist Mill for good, leaving all the equipment intact as is. George and Martha continue to live in the Mill House for the next several years. Vern is married and living in Florida, and Carol is also married and no longer living at home. In 1969 Martha dies, and George is now the only resident in the house for the next two years.

In 1971, George goes to live with his daughter Carol and her family. In 1973, he dies at the age of 83. He is the last of the Mill operators who lived, prospered and raised his family in the Mill House. He has lived a long and successful life. He has left a legacy that is remembered and shared as an important part of Wisconsin's history.

Footnote: Today we are very fortunate that this history lives on. Thanks to the Town of Richfield (aka the Village of Richfield), the Richfield Historical Society, its many dedicated and hardworking volunteers and the descendants of the Messer and Mayer families, the history of the Grist Mill and the Mill House have been restored and preserved for all to enjoy.

If you missed reading the first three articles in this series, you can find them in past RHS newsletters:

- 1 -- December 2016 Newsletter: "A Journey to Richfield" which told the story of Andrew Messer who built the Grist Mill and the Mill House.
- 2 -- April 2017 Newsletter: "Making a Life in America" which continued the story, including the next family to live in the Mill House; i.e., the Mayers,
- 3 -- August 2017 Newsletter: "Living into the 20th Century" which followed the Mayer family as they lived and prospered into the new century.



George Mayer in later years sitting in the Mill House kitchen next to the wood-burning cook stove.

President

Del Schmechel

Currently I find myself President of the Richfield Historical Society, and I'm very aware of those who have come before me. Each one of us gets the same 24 hours a day to use as we want. Some say "if I only had time" followed by "I would do this or that." It's a matter of setting priorities and making time for others.

Our wonderful Historical Park exists due to hard work and countless hours by "regular people" just like you. They noticed a building that would otherwise have had to be demolished. Now that building is a Nationally Registered Landmark that you can enjoy when you visit the Park.

That was just the beginning. Now we have 10 buildings that help us keep history alive. Each one has a story that our volunteers are happy to tell. Our latest addition is our Blacksmith Shop, and only time will tell what the future may bring.

Many think of our history as starting with the pioneers who arrived here around 1836. The reality is that Paleo Indians may have lived here between 12,500 and 6,500 B.C. They were nomadic, and it wasn't until 300 B.C. to 1,300 A.D. that their culture had become more sedentary. At that point, they lived in longhouses; and they may have had small gardens and hunted with bow and arrow.

As you can see, we are relative newcomers. It would be foolish if we didn't learn from those who came before. History has a lot to teach us. The RHS is dedicated to learning from and then passing on these historical lessons. Without our dedicated volunteers, we wouldn't be able to accomplish much at all. That brings me back to my hope that more people will say "I can find the time to help." It's just that important!

Blacksmith Shop

Kathy Lauenstein

Open for only its second event at the recent Maple Syrup Family Day in March, many people were seeing the new RHS blacksmith shop in action for the first time. In addition to many curious children and adults alike, FOX 6 reporter Brian Kramp received a lesson in blacksmithing from RHS blacksmith Gary Gade. Helping demonstrate the blacksmithing trade during the event were Al Mayer and Alan Jung, in addition to Gary. A children's area was set up at the north end of the shop where Denise Kutz helped the visiting children crank the forge blower.

As the blacksmith shop operation grows, some of the items that can be seen being made will include leaves, nails, hooks, and tools to be used in the blacksmithing operation. The event season is just starting. Stop in and check out the new Blacksmith Shop at all of the events. You're likely to see new things and improvements as the operation evolves.



Blacksmith Shop



Blacksmith Shop Forge

Collections

Jean Happel/Norb Berres

In January, we were presented with two fine musical instruments which had been owned and played by members of the Mayer family. Also included in the donation were several books of music they played, with many of the tunes hand drawn on the staves, likely a collection copied from other printed music. There is a cornet with a leather case and several attachments which are used to alter the key. This we are told was played by Milton Mayer's wife Amanda Dorn. We also received a violin with a leather case and bow. The violin is needing a bit of restoration; the strings are broken; and there are some scratches in the finish.

Milton Mayer is said to have played this violin with a small seven instrument orchestra that he founded. They played regularly at a POW camp in Hartford during WW II. In October of 1944, the Chandelier Ballroom had become Camp Hartford hosting 300 prisoners at first, later up to 600. The prisoners were used to fill the labor shortage that was experienced in Hartford at that time. They were paid for their work. The POW created their own band and a choir which entertained the community on holidays. When the weather was warm, they even had a soccer league which played on the 65 acres that the camp covered. The camp was known as the best prisoner of war camp in the state.

The cornet has a nickel finish which is a bit tarnished, but can be expected for an instrument that is a hundred and eleven years old. The serial number indicates it was manufactured in 1907 by the Lyon & Healy Company in Chicago, a company still in business and still making fine musical instruments. Long ago they stopped making brass instruments, though, to concentrate on what launched the company in 1889.

George W. Lyons and Patrick J. Healy in May of 1864 were Bostonians that had been sent to Chicago to evaluate a music shop for a Boston music publisher. Instead of returning to Boston, they decided to buy the music store and stay in Chicago. It wasn't long before they expanded into selling and manufacturing instruments. Their first newspaper ad was printed in the Chicago Tribune alongside the story of General Sherman's march to the sea. They also acquired the exclusive representation of Steinway pianos for the Chicago area. They began a first in merchandizing, a picture catalog which included prices, a brand-new idea at the time. They then began with a purpose of building "the finest harp the world has ever seen," and they accomplished that goal and maintain that standard even today. Their harps are used by most of the great symphony orchestras in the world.

Even though they no longer produce the cornet, it is still recognized as a fine musical instrument. Their coronets still hold their value in the marketplace.

The violin was crafted in Germany and has on its label the name Ernst Kreuzler. It is a copy in the style of Nicolas Amati, who was one of the many Amati family's violin makers. The violin is not dated, but the name Ernst Kreuzler was used as a fictitious label name by the Earnst Heinrich Roth large violin workshop in the East German town of Markneukirchen, located near the Czech Republic.

In 1873, Gustav Roth founded his violin shop. His son, Earnst Heinrich, was born in 1877 and grew up learning to play several stringed instruments, as well as the piano and trumpet. He learned to be an excellent craftsman and studied the craft under violin makers in Italy, Austria and several other countries. In 1902, he and his cousin, Gustav Ficker, started their own violin company. He marketed violins under several trade names, including Earnst Kreuzler used between 1910 and 1920. Also names used were E. Martin, John Batista Asaro and a few others. The Roth violins vary in quality, some being extremely fine instruments commanding very high prices, while others are of far less quality. They produced their violins in several grades for different budgets. Today, their value needs to be based on the quality of materials, workmanship, tone and condition, rather than on pedigree.

The Roth workshop produced copies of Stradivarius and Guarneri violins as well as several of the Amati family violins. The differences are subtle. The instrument we have is needing some attention as it has been played for a century and has a few blemishes.

Education

Kathy Weberg

It's that time of year again! Our two Education Days are coming up on May 17 and May 23. This year we will have close to 200 students participating in these full day field trips. These Education Days could not happen without our devoted volunteers. The children pass through ten different stations. Depending on the grouping, volunteers repeat their message as many as twelve times. Every twenty minutes, a new group will arrive at each station: six in the morning and six in the afternoon. That's a lot of talking! It's no wonder we get such high marks from teachers and chaperones. If you'd like to become a part of this exciting day, please give your education chairperson a call.

Events Coordinator

Daryl Grier

Maple Syrup Family Day – Pete Samson

Maple Syrup Family Day was a huge success despite cold temperatures and strong winds. People of all ages came to the Park to see the many different activities that were offered.

The main attraction was a demonstration and discussion in the Sugar Shack. People lined up and waited to hear and see the process of making maple syrup presented by Dave Reich and Dave Derrick and several others. The visitors really enjoyed the samples of maple syrup at the end of the demonstration.



Sugar Shack

Maple Cotton Candy has become a favorite treat while attending Family Day. People could be seen eating the cotton candy throughout the Park, especially at the Blacksmith Shop and Pioneer buildings, offering a welcome respite from the cold. Other visitors rode “the people mover” riding to the other end of the Park to tour the Mill House, Grist Mill and Welcome Center.

I'd like to mention the Historical Park can be enjoyed regularly, not only on our event days. The river and trails running through it make it especially scenic. Mark your calendars for next March 23rd, 2019 our next Maple Syrup Family Day. You won't be disappointed.

Step Back in Time – Daryl Grier

1 p. m. to 4 p. m. on May 13th, June 10th, July 8th, August 12th.

Admission: \$5; Children 5 & Under, Free.

Refreshments Available for Sale

Enjoy our park Sunday afternoons this summer while learning about daily living long ago. Activities for the entire family include:

- Play “What’s That Sound?” at the Lillicrapp Welcome Center.

- Wash clothes using a scrub board; then run them thru a wringer; and hang them to dry at the Mill House.
- Grind corn stalks at the Mill.

New This Year -- Check the Richfield Historical Society's historic photo files for your family's photos at the Lillicrapp Welcome Center. Research Fee: \$5 per half hour.



Grinding Corn



Washing Clothes

Historic Sites

Quint Mueller

In the last newsletter, I said winter was clearly here. It doesn't seem so clear with spring this year. Oh well, life and progress continue at the Richfield Historical Park with a few delays. As of the last newsletter, we reported an issue with the soil conditions around and beneath the Mill. That issue necessitated some changes to the foundation reconstruction plan, but that's all behind us now. All of the structural work has now been completed, including reinforcement of the lower Hurst frame timbers. The Hurst frame timber structure is directly below the mill stones. The purpose of this structure is not only to support the heavy mill stones but to transmit the vibration of the milling process to the masonry foundation, isolating it from the rest of the Mill structure.

There are a few tasks yet to be completed before this portion of the project is complete. One of the tasks remaining is the final pargeting of the stone veneer. This is a thin layer of color matched mortar applied over the structural mortar. In order for this to be done properly, the temperature of the masonry structure needs to be above 40-45 degrees. In addition to the pargeting, the final back filling and site restoration needs to be completed. This needs to wait for the frost to be out of the ground. We have taken the approach that it is more important to complete this project in a manor that will stand the test of time, versus completing it quickly. After all, preservation is part of the RHS mission.

One of the features of the Park (beside our wonderful historic buildings) is the setting amongst the many trees. Unfortunately, the Richfield Historical Park was not spared from the emerald ash borer beetle. The high concentration of ash trees in the Park area near the Mill has led to a massive loss of trees. As part of the Village's plan, all of the ash trees in the active park areas are in the process of being eliminated. This is nothing unique to our park. It's happening throughout southeast Wisconsin. Although the Village of Richfield is driving the elimination of the ash trees, RHS is developing a reforestation plan for the Park. In the coming years, the removed ash trees will be replaced by multiple species of trees in a manor that will not only compliment the visible pleasure of the Park, but also be coordinated with usage plans. Being able to plan the placement of the trees will be an advantage in the future compared to the random locations of the original trees. (Some of their

locations were difficult to work around for events.) We now have the opportunity to locate trees where they will be the most beneficial for RHS.

Many of you are aware of the impending reconstruction of Hwy. 164 through Richfield. The original plan would not have affected RHS events in 2018. However, WisDOT funding has become available that will allow more construction to occur in 2018 than originally predicted. It appears that the major disruption to traffic in 2018 will be the portion of Hwy. 164 south of Hwy. 167. Although this will have some impact on RHS events, it will not likely be major. According to the latest information from WisDOT, there is the potential for a full closure of Hwy. 164 between Pioneer Road and Cty. E for 30 days sometime after July. Obviously, this could have a significant impact on either Art at the Mill or the Thresherec. We are staying on top of this to lessen the impact as much as possible. If you live near Hwy. 164, you will likely be receiving a letter from WisDOT (if you haven't already) outlining the plan changes in the near future.

As is always the case, work never ceases in the Park. There are many maintenance projects in the plan for this year. Some of those projects include finishing the painting of the Mill (delayed due to the start of construction of the foundation), painting of the Wood Shed, tuck pointing of the Mill House foundation, and replacement of the Mill House front porch.

Lillicrapp Welcome Center

Aerona Smith

Thriving years for the General Store lasted from the 1870s to the 1930s. Store owners were shrewd businessmen. A saloonkeeper in Dayton, Ohio, John Ritty, was experiencing problems with his dishonest employees. He decided to invent a machine that could track his sales. He was successful, and invented the first cash register. On November 4, 1879, his invention was patented; and he called it "Ritty's Incorruptible Cashier." Ritty eventually sold his patent to a group of Ohio investors; and in 1884, the National Cash Register Company was founded.

The Richfield Historical Society is both pleased and proud to have in our general store a 1904 model #147 National Cash Register. This register is copper with a black oxide finish and is from the Racine, Wisconsin area. For many of our visitors, the "ka-ching" of the register bell brings back memories of long ago. Today brass, copper and silver-plated cash registers are still admired for their beauty, design, and function.

The Lillicrapp Welcome Center with its General Store displays and early Richfield photography will be open for all the Richfield Historical Society's 2018 events. We are handicap accessible, and our location is just north of the Mill and Mill House.



National Cash Register #147

Library/Program/Newsletter

Marge Holzbog

The RHS Library Committee is out again interviewing Richfield seniors about their memories of 20th century, this time on "Downtown" Richfield. Given the number of interviewees on our list, these memories will be published in two parts with the first part available for purchase at the Lillicrapp Welcome Center at our Annual

Threshere and Harvest Festival. Be certain to come early to make your purchase as this will be a "limited" edition.

On your next visit to the Lillicrapp Welcome Center you will see a very large iconic 1873 wall map of Washington County. Its margins are filled with interesting historical detail. We received this map as a donation from member Mike Schuetz; and Collection Committee Co-Chair, Norb Berres, did his usual fine work of mounting it on the Welcome Center hallway wall. We are expanding our display of relevant maps, such as the early surveyor's map of Richfield Township. They will be ready for viewing in the Photography Room at the Welcome Center at our Annual Threshere and Harvest Festival.

At our Sunday "Step Back in Time" events (May 13th, June 10th, July 8th and August 12th), you will be able to have access to RHS's historical photo file (3,500) for the small fee of \$5.00 per half hour search. Stop in to see what historical photos we may have on file for your family.

Long Term Planning

Jim Metzger

In past articles concerning Long Term Planning, the topic of building restoration, maintenance and future Park enhancements have been addressed. The topic now will deal with long term planning in the form of "Planned Giving" that is helping to secure capital needed to accomplish the long range goals of the Richfield Historical Society (RHS). Our present fundraising events do a great job in bringing in money and secondly introducing new people to the Historical Park each year. Our volunteer work crew does a marvelous job with most of the needed tasks that are on-going, but many times outside contractors are needed for specific jobs outside of our talent realm.

Planned Giving can come in many forms. A planned gift can help ensure RHS's future and also express your personal values. There are many ways you can give such as donations made during your life or upon death. Because of tax benefits, gifts like appreciated securities, real estate and cash are often better given during your lifetime. Other options, such as retirement assets and benefits of a Payable on Death account, are better suited to posthumous donations.

- **Bequest:** Naming the Richfield Historical Society in your will is one of the simplest ways to make a gift from your estate.
- **Living Trust:** A clause similar to a will bequest will implement a charitable gift to the RHS through your living trust. A Revocable Living Trust is a private legal arrangement that can provide investment management during your lifetime and a plan for distributing your assets at your death. This plan provides significant flexibility in investing, paying out income and distributing principal and does not go through probate saving time and money at your death.
- **Payable on Death or Transfer on Death Accounts:** Establish a bank account, brokerage account, savings deposit. As the owner of your account, you can cancel or change it as you wish. At your death, unlike Wills, Payable on Death accounts do not involve probate, allowing for quicker distribution and privacy.
- **Life Insurance Gift:** Leaving a life insurance gift is another simple way to make a difference. You can donate a policy or name RHS as a beneficiary.
- **Charitable IRA Gift:** The Pension Protection Act of 2006 has been renewed for donors 70 ½ years of age and older, providing incentives for making charitable gifts from potentially taxable IRA funds.
- **Retirement Funds:** RHS may be named as beneficiary or part of all that remains of your IRA, 401K, 403 (b) or other qualified pension funds.

When a person considers a planned gift, it suggests forethought. Efforts to encourage planned gifts are popular among thousands of colleges, universities, museums and community foundations. The Richfield Historical Society is fully qualified to accept this kind of gift.

Planned Giving can make good sense for many ordinary citizens; the wealthy have made use of this tool

for decades. Consult your personal advisors to determine how such a gift would affect your overall tax and estate planning as well as the rules of your state of residence.

Marketing

Diane Pedersen

The Richfield Historical Society (RHS) marketing team decided to expand advertising and Facebook promotions in 2018 for all RHS events. The first two RHS events, *Antiques, Appraisal and Chili Luncheon* (AACL) Feb 18th and *Maple Syrup Family Day* (MSFD) March 24th were exceedingly successful benefiting from our advertising expansion.

Advertising for AACL included articles and ads in *Auction, Action, Antiques News* and *Yesteryear* magazines specific to people interested in antiques. The event was also promoted on the RHS Facebook page weekly for about 2 months with a resounding response from RHS Facebook friends.

The event's profit was more than former years, twice as many people came with items to be appraised, 19 antique dealers, 1 art dealer and 2 candy and nut vendors had a profitable day. Even though we prepared more chili than in years past, again it was a sellout.

SAVE THE DAY – FEBRUARY 17, 2019
AACL will also offer Genealogy research



Antique Dealers' Room

New advertising for MSFD included promotions in *Washington County Daily News*, various online event websites as well as the RHS Facebook page. Again RHS Facebook promotions were submitted about 2 months prior to the event, and some posts were seen by over 500 viewers.

Fox 6, a Milwaukee TV station, promoted MSFD on Friday the 23rd with 4 live segments between 8:40 and 10 am. The day of the event, they visited the Sugar Shack and actually helped make maple sugar and helped the blacksmith in the new Blacksmith Shop. In the Messer/Mayer Mill, viewers saw mill stones; and Richie, the RHS Mascot, stopped in for a visit. How exciting for the Richfield Historical Society to be featured on Fox 6 TV.

While Saturday the 24th was cool and very windy, visitors exceeded any prior MSFD event. Visitors purchased and enjoyed over 150 maple cotton candy and hot dogs. They viewed blacksmiths as they crafted items, and children enjoyed story time in the Pioneer Home. Maple syrup was a sellout. Yes, Richie was there. Another huge success for the Richfield Historical Society.

SAVE THE DAY - MARCH 23, 2019 - MSFD
You have to taste RHS Maple Cotton Candy.



Richie with Celebrity & Del Schmechel

Membership

Warren Wiedmeyer

Membership in the Society is one of the main ways we can support the various projects and programs that

enable us to fulfill our goals and objectives relative to preserving our heritage and educating the public about the first settlers of Richfield. Information from our 2017 membership rolls suggests that we had 34 Business/Corporate members, 15 Lifetime members and 208 Family memberships.

As a member, you are updated as to our Society's progress via the Newsletter, an example of which you are reading right now. But, obtaining this Newsletter may not be the main driver as to why you have become a member in the first place. Quite often it is to provide the monetary support we need. But there could be another reason. Take my personal story as an example: My wife and I originally grew up in the Town of Polk. Schooling and then jobs took us out of the area. Now we are back and are reconnecting with our roots. I knew that my ancestors originally settled in Richfield, but it was only by becoming aware of the Mill that the Society is working to restore in the Park did I come to realize that my great, great grandfather actually had his grain processed in that very mill! So, in my case, becoming a member of the Society and volunteer at the Park was only natural. I think my ancestors would be pleased.

As Membership Chair, I am excited to invite Park visitors and others to become members of the Society AND participate in the various volunteer opportunities we offer - whether it is helping out with the Thursday Work Crew at the Park, being a guide at the Visitor Center, being part of one of our special events teams, etc. So, even if you are a member of the Society, but have hesitated to become more involved, I encourage you to talk to one of us on the Board. I am sure you have a skill or ability that could help us out. If not, I would like you to spread the word about the Society and the Park to your friends and relatives. Who knows, they may have a special historical connection to Richfield and the area that they may not even be aware of!

Mill House

Clara Birkel/Cindy Schmechel

If you love sharing the history of Richfield, please consider joining us as a volunteer tour guide at the Messer/Mayer Mill House. This beautiful mid-1860s farm house is loaded with original character and charm and contains many of the personal items and much of the original furniture that belonged to the families who lived and worked there for over 100 years.

If you are willing to join us, we will gladly give you all the information and training that you would need to make visiting the Messer/Mayer Mill House an enjoyable experience for guests of all ages and to make their visit to the Richfield Historical Park a memorable one. Please consider becoming a tour guide at the Messer/Mayer Mill House today!

Contact Clara Birkel at 262-622-3191 or Cindy Schmechel at 282-628-0919 for more information.

Mill Restoration

Harry Niemann

At long last, we are approaching completion of the foundation repairs of the Mill. After weather and soil problems caused delays, the end is finally in sight. When the weather warms up a bit more, the final tuck pointing of the mortar will be installed, followed by back filling and grading of the soil.

There is also some back filling to be done inside the basement against the new turbine wall. When that is done, we can begin replacing equipment items that were removed for construction.

One of the items removed was a long line shaft beneath the floor. Installed on this shaft were sheaves or flat pulleys around which wide leather belts extended up through slots in the floor to drive the roller mills above. Other items to be reinstalled are the bottom sheaves and housings of the cup elevators. The pressure box will also have to be rebuilt. This is the vertical waterway that directed flow to the turbine. The turbine is going to be refurbished by a good friend of the Society, Tom Steinbach. Again, the end is in sight to "Get It Grinding."

Pioneer Homestead

Susan Sawdey

A Vision for the Pioneer Homestead - I never imagined while volunteering for the last time at the 2008 Richfield Historical Society's Threshere that I would be back in Southeastern Wisconsin. Back then, the Motz Cabin had gapped log walls, a rough cut floor, and a new shake roof, but that was the extent of it. Any demonstrations or interpretations were held outside the Cabin. Over the last ten years, the Pioneer Homestead has been a staple of the west end of the Park. Grouped with the Log Barn, Sugar Shack, and the newly added Blacksmith Shop; Richfield has a living interactive museum in its own backyard!

The vision of a living museum for the Pioneer Homestead in 2018 has been renewed with vigor. With a bit of imagination, our visitors will be able to visualize life as Charles and Pauline Motz lived in the mid-1800s in this very cabin. A life with little or no medicine or general store where you could buy flour, sugar, coffee and a handful of essentials (or convenience items). It was hard work shearing, spinning, weaving or knitting your own clothes (fabric was a luxury); spending an entire day walking where you needed to go because that was the common mode of transportation; living in a drafty house and waking to snow on your bed; eating soup for most of your meals and consuming every part of the animal including the tail! Hauling water for you and your animals, caring for your livestock and crops (AKA your food) and preparing to freeze or starve over the long Wisconsin winter was difficult as well as challenging.

("A Glimpse at Simple Homesteading Life in the 1800s" Countryside Daily, 13 Sept. 2017)

I look forward to the years ahead and encourage you to stop at the Pioneer Homestead during our 2018 events and experience life as it was lived in log cabin days.

Project Coordinator

Del Schmechel

Our Thursday Crew is busy throughout the year. The Crew is made up of 22 retired men who each have talents we make use of. Currently we are adding air conditioning in the Mill House and the Welcome Center. Another project is the addition of a loft in the Barn/Museum. We plan to use this area to store donated items that we rotate through our displays. The Mill House will receive a new porch deck before our first event in May. Other projects include installation of rain gutters and down spouts to the Welcome Center along with a wonderful new sign.

The Grist Mill has undergone years of work to repair the foundation. That work, being almost completed, will allow us to reinstall many pieces of equipment that had to be removed to allow for this restoration work to proceed. This building was once powered by a water turbine that is being restored and will soon be reinstalled. As a backup, there was a cylinder engine located in an engine shed. Building an engine shed may be our next large mill related project. Once completed, it will allow us to drive the mill stone with this engine.

If all of this wasn't enough, our crew also makes award winning maple syrup in our very own sugar shack. During the season, this work goes on seven days a week from 8 a.m. till 5 p.m. You might be surprised at the many steps required to make this sweet treat from all natural tree sap.

All of the Society members who put in countless hours receive only the gratitude of our visitors as payment. You seldom see all of the work required to put on our park events. If you enjoy your next visit to the Richfield Historical Park, please thank the men and women volunteers who you meet at our various attractions.

Volunteer Coordinator

Sharon Lofy

Thank you for purchasing \$25 and \$15 plant certificates. Again a big THANK YOU goes to Sunny Point Gardens for making this RHS Fund Raiser possible. If you have any questions about additional certificates,

please call me at 262 297 1546. The Fundraiser is for the month of May. These certificates make great gifts. All of us enjoy seeing the first signs of something green with all the beautiful colors that follow.

We are looking forward to the coming months filled with RHS events. Step Back in Time (May 13, June 10, July 8 and August 12); Art at the Mill (July 28) and the RHS 20th Annual Threshere & Harvest Festival (September 15 & 16) are the dates to mark on your calendar. Hope you can make it. Be sure to let relatives, friends and neighbors know about these dates. This means you will be receiving a phone call from me asking you to give a helping hand. We are always in need of volunteers. Many friendships are made while volunteering. If you know of relatives, friends and neighbors that would like to volunteer with you, please let me know. Youth looking for community service hours are always welcome. Thanks to your talents and time, we can make these events happen. The Richfield Historical Park would not exist without YOU! Thank you.

COMING PROGRAMS – Free - Highway 175 Richfield Fire Hall 7:00 p.m.

May 26, 2018 – “One Room Schools: Stories from the Day of 1 Room, 1 Teacher, 8 Grades - Susan Apps Bodilly

September 27, 2018 – “McCormick & International Harvester” – Sally Jacobs

October 25, 2018 – “When Daddy Is Coming Home” – Richard Carlton Haney

November 15, 2018 – “Margaret Cummins – Christmas at Balmoral” – Jessica Michna

COMING EVENTS – Richfield Historical Park

Step Back in Time – May 13th, June 10th, July 8th, August 12th - See Page 7 for details

Art at the Mill – Saturday, July 28, 2018 - See below

Threshere & Harvest Festival – Saturday & Sunday, September 15th & 16th - See below

Christmas in Richfield – Saturday, December 1, 2018

10th Annual Richfield Art at the Mill
Art and Fine Craft Fair



July 28, 2018 ~ 10am-4pm

Richfield Nature/Historical Park
 1896 State Rd. 164
 Richfield, WI 53076

- 60+ Talented Artists & Variety of Vendors
- Silent Auction
- Live Music
- Great Food
- Tour Historic Buildings (small fee)
- Free Parking & Ride to Exhibit Area
- Admission: \$2

Major Sponsors 

Richfieldhistoricalsociety.org



RICHFIELD HISTORICAL SOCIETY
 20th Annual
Old Time Threshere & Harvest Festival

September
 15-16,
 2018
 Richfield, Wis

Featuring 20 Years of RHS Mill Restoration Progress
 Messer Mill-1857-1874 Mayer Mill-1874-1974