



Richfield Historical Society
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 richfieldhistoricalsociety.org

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Winter 2019 V22N3

Blacksmith Shop
Kathy Lauenstein

Collections
Norb Berres

Education
Kathy Weberg

Event Coordinator
Daryl Grier

Historic Sites
Quint Mueller/
Herb Lofy

Library/Program/
Newsletter Editor
Marge Holzbog

Lillicrapp Welcome
Center
Aerona Smith

Long-Term Planning
Susan Sawdey
(acting chair)

Marketing
Doug Wenzel

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

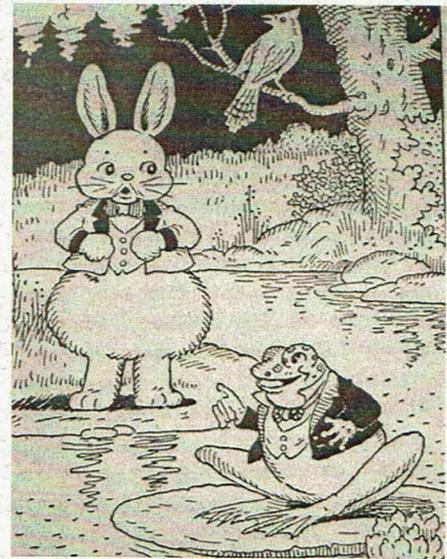
The Perfect Christmas Gift – Susan Brushafter

Have you ever wondered what kinds of Christmas gifts children wished for in the early 1900s? By 1900, one American in five was estimated to have a Christmas tree. One of the most popular Christmas gifts younger children hoped to see under that tree in the 1910s was the rocking horse, similar to the one proudly displayed in the Lillicrapp Welcome Center. Typical toys delighting children in 1912 included wooden building sets, toy cars, and rag dolls. Other children enjoyed receiving a bag of nuts, an orange, and (yes) fireworks.

It seems, however, that some children enjoyed receiving books. This was clearly demonstrated by the Thornton W. Burgess (1874-1965) book collection that Carol Woods donated to the Richfield Historical Society. Burgess wrote popular children's stories, including the Old Mother West Wind series, which was part of Carol's collection. Burgess loved nature, both its beauty and the animals that lived in it. By the time he passed away, he had written more than 170 books and 15,000 stories for a syndicated daily newspaper column called Bedtime Stories. He also broadcast to listeners in 30 states his Radio Nature League radio series!

Carol Woods' donation of 33 books is especially endearing. The books were published from 1907 to 1927. (Burgess' last book was published in 1965.) Many of the books in Carol's collection included handwritten inscriptions to recipient children. "The merriest Christmas ever for a dear little niece, Roberta" typifies the love and thoughtfulness with which the books were given. Several of the books have markings from bookstores that sold them. A plethora of the books include the names and locations of private owners, including from the states of Massachusetts, Wisconsin, Maine, New York, and Pennsylvania.

How did Carol acquire this eclectic collection? I recently had the privilege of talking to Carol,



"You don't mean to say so," Peter, interrupted Grandfather Frog.

and her immediate answer to my question was: "One at a time." She has loved the Thornton Burgess books since she was a young girl and attended Friess Lake School. As there was no school library, Carol's teacher, who taught all eight grades, would bring in batches of books for the children to read. Among those books were several Burgess books; Carol read every one.

As an adult, Carol and her husband Bob owned an antiques business, which involved books. As they traveled, Carol would look for Burgess books and found many of them in various book stores. She wanted them for the stories. Carol didn't find all of the books but noted, "If I had the time and patience, I would have all of them."

To write this article for the RHS newsletter, I wanted to know more about the books themselves. I picked out four books, known as the Mother West Wind Collection, Volume 2. These four books were the last of the Mother West Wind series, and include Mother West Wind "Why," "How," "When," and "Where" stories. They were published in 1915, 1916, 1917, and 1918, respectively.

I had mentioned earlier that these books were endearing. Not only did I get to meet a host of animal characters, I could picture them and their unique and memorable qualities, and looked forward to their next adventures. Main characters appear in each of these books, including Old Mother Nature, Grandfather Frog, the Green Meadows, the Old Briar-Patch, Old King Bear, and the busiest and most curious of them all, Peter Rabbit. Through the books, I was able to learn 'why' Flitter the Bat flies at night, 'how' Tufty the Lynx happens to have a stump of a tail, 'when' Old Mister Rat became an outcast, and 'where' Big-Horn got his curved horns.

The true gems found in each of these four books, as Carol Woods had also discovered, are the life lessons, cleverly included in many of the stories. These lessons are brought to the reader's attention either by Mother Nature in the way she reacted to forest characters' requests or innovations: sometimes with rewards, or occasionally with changes as a result of laziness, nastiness, or greed. Peter Rabbit often had his over-the-top curiosity satisfied by many of the lessons he learned.

Consider the child enjoying his or her Mother West Wind Christmas gift book, and reading these words of wildlife characters' wisdom:

"There is nothing in the world more foolish than vanity."

"I'm little and timid, but I'd rather be that way than to be big like Puma but a coward and a sneak. I can look any one in the face."

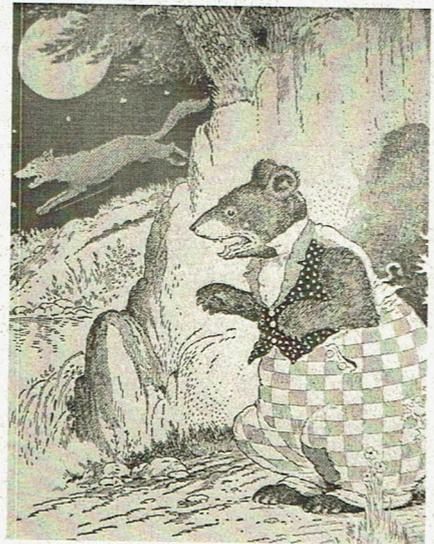
"Plain clothes sometimes cover the kindest hearts, and fine clothes often are a warning to beware of mischief."

"Mr. Coon's tail was ringed way to the tip. There was one for cheerfulness, and one for faith, and one for persistence in making the best of a bad matter..."

"It pays to make the best of what we have, doesn't it?"

"You can't learn to swim by holding your breath on dry land."

Isn't it curious how often we want things we don't need at all. And, those are the things that make us the most trouble in the world?"



"Old King Bear, who was king no longer, would growl a deep rumbly-grumbly"

A final thoughtelectronic devices, online games, and costly gifts are often on our children's and grandchildren's Christmas lists. Perhaps a well-written book that both entertains and introduces a life lesson or two would truly make a perfect Christmas gift!

What Are You Talking About? – Susan Brushafter

Different centuries and different decades have unique words and sayings that become a part of our language or simply disappear. I was wondering about how folks spoke during the mid-to-late 1800s. I loved the 2010 remake of the western, True Grit. That movie, set in the 1870s, is what made me most curious about how people talked 'back then.'

In the movie, the characters did not (didn't) use contractions. Considering contractions are part of our daily speech patterns, it must have been difficult for the actors to remember not to use them. And, considering that some people believe that not using contractions signifies more formal speech, did all people living in the 1870s speak so...formally?

To satisfy my curiosity, I did some massive, unscientific research. For your reading edification, I watched hours of Gun Smoke (Kansas during the 1870s), Bonanza (Nevada, 1861-1867), Rawhide (cattle drives, 1860s), The Rifleman (New Mexico Territory, 1870s-1880s), and investigated other unreliable sources, in order to get a clear understanding of the spoken language. Yes, I heard this language in saloons, in gun fights, on the range, and in casual discussions, but did not let the setting influence the words and phrases I captured.

Enjoy the following and the associated translations. Only one on this list, to my best knowledge, has carried over from 'back then.' (*Can you pick it out?**)

Stick off	Slink off, away from the conversation
Pawing the ground	Looking for a fight
Poly foxin' around	Sneaking around
Get too chinny	Gabbing too much
Wally blobbles	An animal's illness
Start a fracas	Begin an argument
Vittles	Food
Feather foot off	Sneak away
Absquatulate	Leave or disappear
Nester	A homebody
Damfino	"Damned if I know" -- a cuss contraction?
Gas pipes	Especially tight pants
Make a stuffed bird laugh	Outrageously preposterous
Mutton shunter	Police
Looksome	Walk
Twistee	Tornado
Palotsome	Delicious
Glom	Overly sensitive

If you want to get an idea of real mid-to-late 1800s language, check out this website, Old West Words and Wisdom, <https://www.legendsofamerica.com/we-slang/>

That said, pardon me while I absquatulate (aka, Get Out of Dodge); Gunsmoke starts in five minutes!

*vittles

THE ENGINE SHED PROJECT & The Importance of Teamwork – Tim Einwalter

The Engine Shed project began earlier this year when the Engine Shed Ad-Hoc Committee was formed. Their goal was to construct the Engine Shed to be an historically accurate representation of the original Engine Shed. Thankfully, back in 1988 Herb Lofy and Dan Wittenberger shot a video as they walked around the mill. This video, and the sketches which were drawn prior to clearing the debris, were indispensable to us as we attempted to replicate the Engine Shed.

Before putting a shovel in the ground, it was necessary to come up with a design. I approached my employer, GRAEF, and asked if they would be willing to design and engineer the building on a pro-bono basis. Since my firm is willing to give back to the community, they were inclined to step up and help.

With the design finalized, we then turned our attention to bidding out the concrete form work. We quickly realized the construction market was still at full capacity and many contractors were simply not looking to take on additional work; much less a project where the client was looking for a discount. After some searching, it was suggested that I try contracting Duquaine Concrete out of West Bend. After a brief conversation with Ed, he indicated his company would be willing to make an in-kind donation to the Richfield Historical Society.

Unfortunately, when you ask for a discount, you can't ask to be placed at the front of the line. We had to be patient and wait for our turn. Initially our turn was projected for mid-October, but as the date approached it was pushed back to late November. After all, paying work must come first! As November approached, so did winter - with record low temps. When our turn came up, I received a call on Tuesday indicating a forming crew would be on site Friday. I immediately reached out to the excavator that we had lined up; only to discover that the cold temps had shut them down for the season. We now had the concrete crew, but nobody to dig the hole in which to put the concrete.

We initially considered digging the hole ourselves, but the project was beyond our abilities. A skilled excavating contractor was needed. After explaining the predicament to Duquaine, they called a few excavators they had worked with in the past. I mailed the plans to a few, but only one contractor replied; Wollner Excavating. I've known Ray Wollner for several decades but never had the chance to work directly with him. Ray was quick to come to the site and agreed to take on the project with extremely short notice. Even though we were on a "need it now" status, Ray offered to extend his services for a very fair hourly rate.

In anticipation of the concrete work, the Mill had to be prepped for the addition. The stone on the south wall is a veneer which conceals the structural concrete behind. The Engine Shed addition had to be connected directly to the structural concrete, thus mandating the removal of the stone veneer. Al Mayer, Dan and I met on site and worked on the stones for several hours; only to realize the veneer went into the ground much further than we had anticipated. The veneer was so deep that even using Herb's skid-steer to dig down, we couldn't get deep enough to finish the project. It was decided to wait until the foundation was excavated; and then we'd throw a demolition "party." The word was put out; and over a dozen people showed up to help remove the stone veneer. Within 5 hours, we had all the stone removed! My thanks to all that helped!

Now that we had the excavation and demolition complete, attention turned to bringing in the concrete conveyor truck. This was a very large truck that would be used to shuttle the concrete to the forms. Because of the truck's weight; Duquaine was reluctant to take the truck over the bridge over the flume. I showed them the alternate route from the Nature Park, but the approach angle over the culvert was too steep for the truck to drive over. We decided the southern route was the best option, but the culvert approaches would need to be fixed. I placed a call to Wissota, and they were more than willing to donate the stone. However, this was their first day open after being shut down

for two weeks while the railroad crossing was repaired. We had the stone, but there were no trucks available to haul the stone. Wollner quickly stepped up and volunteered to haul the stone for us.

The problem is because of the ice; they were not comfortable driving down the hill. Herb went out and scraped the snow off the hill, but it was still too icy. That night I went out and spread 5 gallons of sand on the hill hoping that it would provide sufficient traction. Wollner's truck driver was still concerned that it was too icy, so I suggested he try backing

down with the tailgate slightly open to spread some stone for added traction. His response was incredulous, "You want me to back down an icy hill with an 80,000 lb. dump truck while spreading gravel?" I backtracked and volunteered that he drop the piles at the top of the hill, and then we would move the gravel. With the concrete pour date rapidly approaching, we had only one cold night to move the stone. That evening Al and I went to the site expecting a late-night project while we graded out the stone. To our surprise Wollner had not only hauled the stone for us, but they had also placed and graded it out! I walked up the hill and sure enough, there was a thin layer of stone that had been placed on top of the snow. My idea had worked!

The next morning the concrete footings were poured, and a few days later the walls were poured. I wanted to wait a week so the concrete could gain some strength before backfilling. Del put out another "all hands needed" call for Saturday so we could backfill the foundation. With plenty of help, all we needed was the stone. I called Wissota to order 5 truckloads of stone; and it turned out that Wissota had been sold just days prior, and they were no longer able to donate the material. I even offered to purchase the stone at full cost, but they simply couldn't help us. Herb reached out to Lannon Stone Products and they were very willing to deliver the stone we needed prior to the weekend for a fair price. Sold! When you need something NOW, you can't beg for a discount; but again, they were very fair to us.

With the stone delivered, it was now time for the backfilling "party." Of course, by now the temps had risen so the previously frozen ground turned to mud. I put tire chains on my skid-steer, hoping they would help keep from not getting stuck. Thankfully, those chains were just enough to allow the machine to move around on the soft ground. I did get a bit bold on the east side of the foundation and had to get pulled out with Herb's tractor. The spot that I got stuck in needed a little more material; and since the tractor was already on site, the moment I was free I drove right back into the same spot and got stuck again. Getting pulled out was way easier than trying to shovel mud!

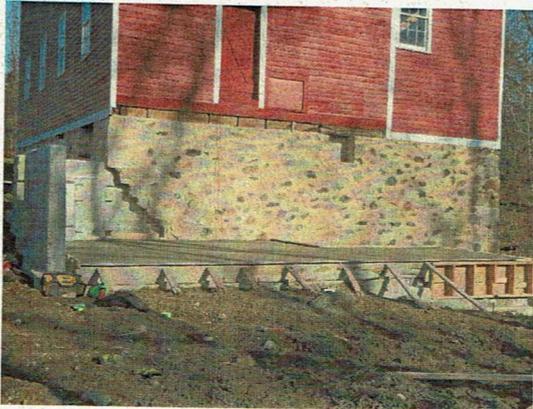
We had two compactors running, and it was all I could do to keep fresh soil in front of them. Incredibly, within three hours, the foundation was backfilled up to grade. This was a very impressive feat because some of the footings were over 8 feet below grade! The next step was to move 80 yards of gravel. Herb suggested we use his tractor because its reach would reduce the amount of shoveling. A secondary benefit is that the bucket on his tractor was much larger than the one on my skid-steer. Getting the job done faster and with less work was a huge WIN! With the pictured crew we placed 9 feet of stone in only a couple of hours. Quite the feat - and I could not be prouder to be associated with such a fine group of people. They all knew what the task was, and they attacked it as if it was their own.



The Crew

With the foundation backfilled, the Engine Shed was now ready to have its floor poured. Duquaine came back again, this time to tie a bed of reinforcing steel that would give the floor its strength. After two days of setting rebar, it was ready for concrete. Once again, Zignego delivered the concrete on time permitting the floor to be poured on Friday December 6th.

With the floor poured, the major construction work for this year is now complete. When frost sets, we'll then move the engine and set it upon its permanent base. Come spring, construction will then resume as the Engine Shed rises up and over to shelter the engine. The phrase "Get it Grinding" is very close to becoming a reality!



I'd like to take a moment and extend my gratitude to the following sponsors; for whom without their help this project would not have been possible!

Duquaine Concrete
Gator Transport
Graef Engineering
Lannon Stone Products

Speedy Metals
Wissota Sand & Gravel
Wollner Excavation
Zignego Ready-Mix

The Finished Job

President/Project Coordinator

Del Schmechel

I have come to believe that we may redefine the word "impossible." If you consider what has been accomplished by our society since it was founded in 1997, you may well agree with me. It's quite possible that a well-grounded educated person may have come to the conclusion that our mill was beyond saving; and even if it was possible, we could never raise the money to get to where we find ourselves today.

I have come to accept that only with hard work, dedication and especially determination will we continue to achieve worthwhile goals. This concept has been our guiding principle for these past 22 years, and I believe it will remain far into the future. Some might say we have achieved enough, and it's time to rest. But, that isn't going to happen. Achievements come in all sizes and often they build on one another. Each is important to the overall experience our guests take-home when they visit our Historical Park.

When I first became a member of our society, the Welcome Center was already on its new foundation and work was underway to complete the interior. Over the years, it has continued to improve beginning with a large visitor's parking lot. It now has a wonderful walkway made possible through donated pavers along with a raised planter and flagpole. A short time ago, we added air conditioning for the comfort of our guests and staff; and we recently completed the rain gutters and an underground pipe system to channel the water away from its foundation.

Our star attraction is our nationally registered Grist Mill with its original equipment on display. It's roof and windows, along with most of its foundation have been restored. We are currently beginning the final phase, the construction of an engine shed which will bring us another step closer to our goal of 'Get It Grinding.'

What makes our mission unique is the hands-on approach to construction. The lumber for the Engine Shed is being made from trees we fell. The cedar shingles (*some of which were already made at the Threshere*) are handmade and will be installed by our dedicated volunteers. In the end, this practice both saves money and produces a truly hand built and historically accurate structure.

Approaching the end of my term as the 9th president of the Richfield Historical Society, I am confident that we are in excellent hands as we go forth with Susan Sawdey taking over the post. I feel very thankful and honored for heading our society these past two years. Our numerous achievements would never have been possible without our many dedicated volunteers, members, and devoted board of directors. My sincere thanks to them all! Thank you,

Blacksmith Shop

Kathy Lauenstein

With the holiday excitement, we think of new and challenging items to make. And, remembering the summer this year, time flies. Where Did the Summer Go?

Remembering when: August Step Back in Time brought in a wonderful collection of metalwork to the RHS Shop from John Schmidt. Greeting visitors, a large Owl with very large eyes sat perched on our wood table. In the hardie tools, sat three Wizards faces watching every move; and in the window, four flowerpots balanced perfectly, hanging there moving in the wind. As the forge roared, a fantastic piece was on the side draft forge. It was a Dragon's head. Thank You, John.

With excitement around every corner and the sounds and smells in the air: It's Thersheree time. It's a great time when more RHS smiths come to work. Ideas flow, each smith with a great item to show and each trying to do more to demonstrate from start to finish how a piece is made. A hardie tool was made out of a trailer ball hitch with both Darold and Kirt working on it together. Lloyd, Jeff and Kayla also worked the show.

Thanks to all the visitors who came to visit. We hope to see you at next year's shows. Stop in, and let us know how we are doing. Or, ask how was it made?

Also, I want to remind you that we still have the Horse Shoe Campaign construction fund. With your horse shoe contribution, your name will be on the RHS walls in the Blacksmith Shop. And, a special thanks to all who supported the campaign.

I think I smell Maple Syrup in the air, best spot in the Park. Come see the RHS Blacksmith Shop.

Collections

Norb Berres

When I was a kid back in the middle of the last century, few people in this hemisphere had ever heard of soybeans. They were common in the Orient, but not here-yet. Today, likely, every American has eaten them in one form or another, even if just the oil or as "soy nuts." People can often even identify them growing in farm fields.

In the late sixties, my father-in-law owned a seed and grain company; and it was one of the top companies in the Midwest for registered and certified seed. He also had oats and soybeans grown under contract for the export market. Because of his good connections with the Ag. Departments at several universities, he would get first dibs on new varieties developed by them. He would take these first issue seeds and have them grown in the southern hemisphere so as to be ready to sell the increased amount in America in the next spring. He was always first with the newest varieties.

I joined him in the seventies when he wanted to do some experimental farming and keep it secret from his competitors. Soybeans were becoming more common; and in his travels, he had discovered two

new crops which were rare in the west and not yet exploited by the seed industry. Chinese and other Oriental restaurant suppliers had been importing these two beans to supply to their clients. Mung beans were sprouted in small shops on screened platforms and then harvested from below and sold as "bean sprouts." A similar size bean, the Azuki bean, was an ancient food crop in Asia, but virtually unknown in America. It was harvested by hand in the Orient because it was a small low-growing plant. Large American combines would not work well. They would leave half the beans on the ground, wasted.

We bought a small combine from an Ag. Salvage yard near Racine. We rebuilt the engine and the cup elevator, got new belts and got it to a usable condition. After a bit of searching, we found a used head which had been used for green beans. With a lot of experimenting, we modified it to operate almost on the ground surface and was actually able to harvest low growing bean pods. With new beater bars, we had a usable machine.

Selling the idea to Midwest farmers was another story. The American market for Azuki beans was small. We would be the only source for seed and the only exporter. Producing the altered combine head was another snag. The Japanese buyers were tickled pink (pink ?) awaiting the results. World politics got in the way with an embargo, and the expense to the farmers was too great.

Azuki beans are the second most common bean in the world, after soy beans, but not in America. As far as I have been able to find out, they are still harvested by hand in Asia.

Education

Kathy Weberg

Some new educational activities were offered at the Threshere in September. Self-directed opportunities were available throughout the Historical Park. Directions were placed on blankets, in tubs or on tables just waiting for young people (and older ones!) to "try out" what was at the various stations. For instance, a rotary phone with numbers to dial....manual typewriters on which to write your name....school books used years ago along with a slate and chalk....and a favorite, flour-sifting at the Grist Mill site. The flour sifting proved to be popular, and the volunteers were able to explain that this was what was done in the Mill after the wheat was ground, only on a much bigger scale.

Self-directed educational activities didn't seem to work out very well as visitors didn't seem quite sure how to handle this concept. Next year the activities will be "tweaked," and volunteers will be available to invite children to participate in multiple activities, hopefully all under a tent. Stay tuned.

Events

Daryl Grier

You may have been at one of our events and thought about something that would make it better or could be done differently. Committees can always use new ideas. If you would like to add your ideas for our events, come to our Events Meetings. We meet about once a month (or less.) Our next meeting is Friday, January 10, 2020. If you would like information about our meetings or have ideas to share, contact Daryl Grier, 262 628-4221 dgrier@charter.net. We are currently working on 2020 events:

The Antique Appraisal & Chili Lunch, February 16, 2020. We will be back at Fire Station #1 as we will not have dealers this year. Come and enjoy our chili lunch while you have your antiques appraised.

The same trustworthy appraisers will be available and eager to see what treasures you might bring in. These appraisers are knowledgeable with regard to coins and stamps, military items, Native American items, Civil War and WWII items, jewelry and general vintage or antique items.

Maple Syrup Family Day, March 28, 2020. This has become a great event for the entire family. Learn how to tap a tree, watch maple syrup being made and lastly have a taste of the sweet treat. The wonderful finished product will be for sale.

The Sugar Shack, located in the south part of the Historical Park, will offer tours and information on how our award winning maple syrup is collected and processed. (It takes 40 gallons of collected sap to make 1 gallon of syrup.) Maple syrup will be available for sale. Hot dogs, beverages, treats, and our own Maple Sugar Cotton Candy will also be available for purchase during the event.

Step Back in Time, June 14th and August 9th, 2020. This year's events will take place on the south end of the Park: Pioneer Village, Blacksmith Shop and the Sugar Shack.

There are always easy, fun volunteer opportunities: maybe serving hot dogs or chili or making cotton candy. When you receive the email requesting volunteers, please sign up. If you do not have email and would like to help, contact Sharon Lofy at 262-297-1546.

Monthly Community Program Refreshments – Deanna Einwalter

If you join us for our monthly programs that have a variety of interesting speakers on various topics, you will notice we have snacks and refreshments. Refreshment time is a good time to talk about what the presenter had to say, or just chat with members and friends. Refreshments stimulate discussion! We ask one person to bring 2 bottles of juice and someone else to bring snacks. Many thanks to those who have donated in the past!

To coordinate refreshment donations, we send an email with the web site address where you can sign up. So, please consider helping out once a year. See the site at <https://www.volunteersignup.org/KM9XR>.

If you don't have email and would like to contribute, contact Deanna Einwalter at 262 227-3227.

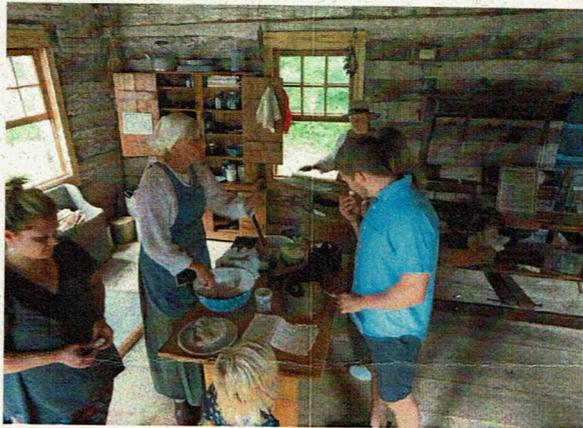
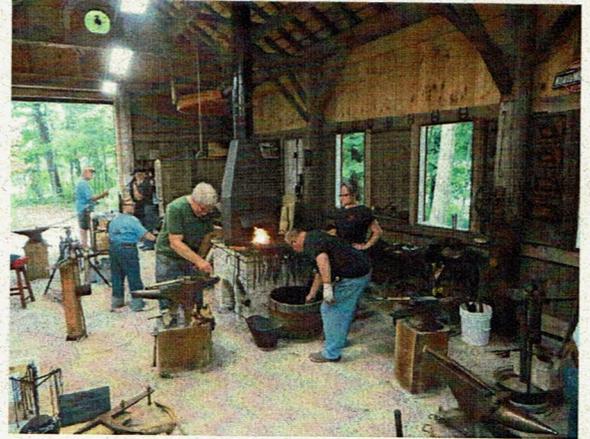
Historic Sites

Quint Mueller/Herb Lofy

Well, Mother Nature finally caught up with the Richfield Threshere and Harvest Festival. 2019 was the first time in 21 years that we had a total wash-out day on Sunday. Fortunately, Saturday, although far from perfect, was favorable enough to encourage 700 paid attendees to enjoy the day. This event reminded us how valuable it is to have sponsors for the Threshere. There are expenses incurred that need to be covered no matter what the weather throws at us. Jean Happel recognized this need many years ago. Thank you to our sponsors who are recognized on our web site, at the Threshere and in this yearend newsletter.

It is very encouraging talking to event attendees who express how they enjoy events in the Park. The Threshere Committee Co-Chairs (Quint, Sharon and Herb) may be a bit partial to the event held the third weekend in September. However, attendee comments usually center around the ambiance in the Park associated with their visit. Also, mentioned is the friendliness of Society volunteers.

The Village of Richfield is fortunate to have a gem such as the Historical Park made possible through the efforts of the Richfield Historical Society and its volunteers. The Nature Park ties in nicely to the south giving a total land base of about 125 acres of park land.



As usual, the Sites Committee has been busy helping coordinate Society projects. The most recent has been the Engine Shed attached to the south side of the Mill. This building will house the large Superior engine. Volunteers have dedicated many hours in planning and site preparation. A special thank you to Tim Einwalter who has overseen the engineering and implementation of the project. Completion of the Engine Shed is a major Thursday Crew construction project in 2020.

There may be another Eagle Scout project in 2020. Watch for details in the next newsletter.

Library/Newsletter/Programs

Marge Holzbog

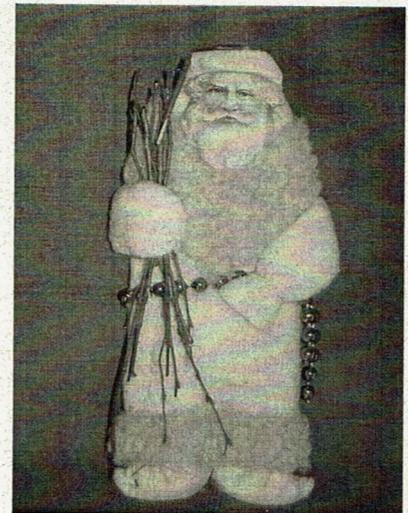
As a member of RHS, you will receive three newsletters such as this one during 2020. In your newsletter, you will find notice of our various events and general meeting programs. Additionally, you will hear from each committee chairman regarding their activities as well as a lead article which brings to you something specific about the village of Richfield's history. Our Community Program listing for January through April is listed on page 15 of this newsletter along with our Book Club monthly selections. Subsequent newsletters will keep you advised regarding activities for the remainder of the year.

Lillicrapp Welcome Center

Aerona Smith

In preparing for the Christmas season, decorating a Christmas tree was an important tradition in many homes. Some of the earliest Christmas tree decorations were ornaments of the edible variety which included fruits, nuts, and sweets. These delicious treats were enjoyed throughout the holidays. At the end of the festivities, little to no ornaments remained on the tree. The idea of permanent Christmas ornaments became popular in America after the Civil War.

From the 1870s up to World War I, "scrap" ornaments became appealing and an affordable way to decorate a tree year-after-year. These brightly dye-cut "scraps" were made from colorful lithograph paper. The printing process used was known as Chromolithographic, and was an immediate commercial success. In this process, sometimes as many as twenty-six (26) colors were used in one design. Many of the "scraps" were embossed to create a dimensional affect. Sometimes lacquer would be applied for a shine. "Scrap" collecting grew in popularity especially among women and children. People also began making their own decorations by cutting pictures from trade cards, calendar tops, and illustrations in magazines. Their collections sometimes were put into scrapbooks and were traded or pressed into Christmas ornaments, and sometimes given as gifts.



Around the same time period, flat cutout cardboard decorations were also made. These homemade decorations sometimes had silhouette shapes which included lithograph paper faces of angels, Santas, fairies, children and animals. Cotton batting, crepe paper, beads and tinsel were commonly used for clothing. Victorian "scrap" ornaments and decorations are highly sought by collectors today.

As the 2019 year comes to a close, many thanks to those who visited the Lillicrapp Welcome Center and our volunteers for helping throughout the past year.

Mill House

Cindy Schmechel/Clara Birkel

More about Lulu (Louise) Mayer from the recollections of her oldest granddaughter, Judith Kaun Prada - She remembered Lulu as the "sweetest person she has ever known." Judie's Mother, Louisa Zillmer Kaun and her family, lived upstairs from Lulu. Judie called Lulu "Mema" because she would insist that Lulu was also her Mother. Judie remembers her grandmother as being an outstanding cook and said that her German

potato salad was the best she ever tasted. Lulu also baked wonderful pies and a delicious coffee cake that, according to Judie, was “out of this world.” Lulu was quite fond of the color red having red carpeting in her living room and dining room as well as a red sofa. She even loved the carpet color so much that when she moved, she took the carpet with her and used it in her bedroom. Lulu’s granddaughter lived with her for a while, and Judie said that Lulu could work rings around anyone when it came to cleaning house.

During their lifetime, five children blessed them with many grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Jack died at the age of sixty-six on Friday, January 1, 1954. Lulu passed away at the age of eighty-seven on March 3, 1976. They are both buried in Valhalla Cemetery on the northwest side of Milwaukee.

We look forward to having you visit the Messer/Mayer Mill House during any of the Richfield Historical Society’s exciting events and sharing more stories with you about the families who made it their home.



The
Wedding
Party

Mill Restoration

Harry Niemann

Millstones are usually used in pairs. The stones generally were about four feet in diameter and were made of pie shaped sections strapped together with an iron band. The stone called the bed stone was stationary at the bottom. The top stone, called the runner, rotated above the bed stone at speeds over 100 RPM . Each stone face was cut with a pattern of grooves called furrows. These furrows worked as a scissors to cut and grind the grain into meal or flour. These grooves acted as feed channels for the flow of grain from the inside to the outside stone.

The upper stone could be raised or lowered in relation to the bed stone. By adjusting the gap between the stones, the Miller could control the fineness of the meal or flour. With use, the furrows would lose their sharp edges becoming dull. During grinding, this would raise the temperature of the meal and affect the quality. So, the furrows would have to be re-sharpened periodically.

A crane assembly was positioned above the stones. It was used to pick up the top mill stone, to remove it for sharpening. It often looked like a pair of iron tongs, attached to a large iron screw and a pivoting gallows-like device, allowing the stone to be flipped over for sharpening.

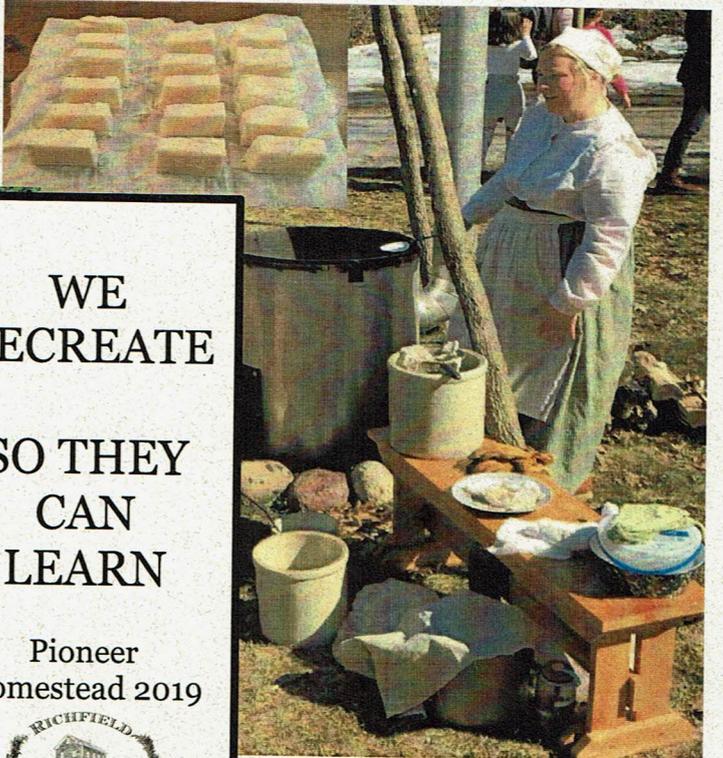
The stones could be either domestic or imported. It was agreed by most millers that the French buhr stone was preferred for wear and quality of flour. A study was made comparing the French buhr stone with a similar looking Ohio Cert or flint stone. Millstones made of Ohio Chert were found to contain saltwater marine fossils much older than the fresh water fossils found in the French buhr. The French stones were much harder and cost three times as much, but they lasted three times longer. Because they were harder, they would keep the edges of the furrows longer. Ours were purchased from E. P. Allis Company.

We are not sure if our stones are French or not. They could be checked for fossil parts.

Pioneer Homestead

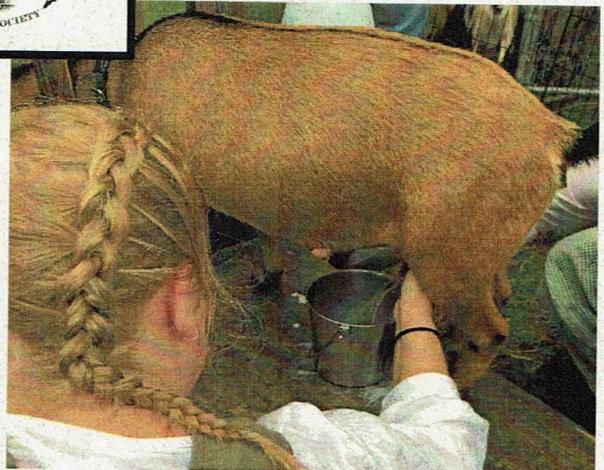
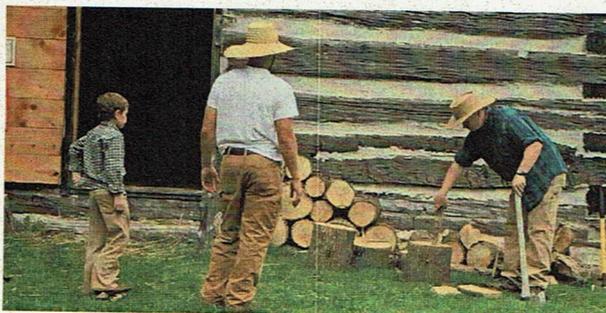
Susan Sawdey

SOCIETY NEWS



**WE
RECREATE
SO THEY
CAN
LEARN**

Pioneer
Homestead 2019



Volunteer Coordinator

Sharon Lofy

What will “2020” have in store for RHS? In February (Sunday, February 16) we will have the Antique Appraisal and Chili Lunch at the Fire Station (Hwy 175.) The Maple Syrup Family Day (Saturday, March 28) will follow. In April, the Plant Certificate Fund Raiser will begin. Step Back in Time will be the second Sunday in June (14th) and August (9th) at the Blacksmith Shop, Sugar Shack, and Pioneer Homestead areas. July will focus on Art at the Mill (July 25.) Come September 19 & 20, the 22nd Richfield Historical Society’s Threshere and Harvest Festival will feature the Pioneer Homestead. Last but not least, Christmas at the Historical Park (Mill House and Welcome Center) will be on Saturday December 5. Please check our website for information about RHS’s wonderful monthly programs, free to the community.

As you see, there will be many opportunities to volunteer. Along with volunteering your time and talents for our events, RHS is always looking for people to help the Thursday crew, give building tours, help our various committees and baking for our events. Information will be emailed to you about areas and time frames to help during our events. (I will call those that do not have email.) If you would like information on areas that you have an interest in, give me a call 262-297-1546. I will direct you to the chair of the area that you have an interest in.

Thank you again for all your support, time and talents that you share with RHS. Your help makes RHS what it is today and keeps it growing. I looking forward to being in touch with you again in 2020. Don’t forget to tell your relatives and friends about RHS.

CHRISTMAS AT THE MILL – Our final event of 2019 with - decorations, wagon rides, home-made cookies, caroling. and wishes to all a HAPPY HOLIDAY!



Photos courtesy of Dave Derrick

Incoming President Letter – Susan Sawdey

As incoming president of the Richfield Historical Society, I would like to express how thankful I am for the support, education, wisdom and knowledge of my fellow board members, volunteers and park visitors. As part of being a lifelong learner, I am always interested in being on the receiving end of a fellow living history lover like myself.

My hope for 2020 is to get to know and engage not only our visitors but the membership that makes up the Richfield Historical Society.

I aspire to celebrate our successes and address where we may have missed our targets along the way. It is my belief that through our unity of purpose we can expect great success in the future. Best Wishes for 2020 to all.

Events –

February 16, 2020 – The Antique Appraisal & Chili Lunch – Fire Station #1

March 28, 2020 – Maple Syrup Family Day – Richfield Historical Park

April, 2020 – Plant Certificate Fund Raiser

June 14, 2020 – Step Back in Time - Richfield Historical Park

Programs – All programs are held at the Richfield Fire Hall Community Room at 7:00 p.m. Programs are free to the public. Refreshments are served.

January 23, 2020 – “The Misunderstood Mission of Jean Nicolet”
Speaker – Patrick J. Jung

February 27, 2020 – “The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald”
Speaker – Rochelle Pennington

March 26, 2020 - “Walking the Home Ground in the Footsteps of Muir, Leopold and Derluth”
Speaker – Robert J. Root

April 23, 2020 - “Pioneer Food & Beverages”
Speaker – Susan Sawdey

Book Club – Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1:00 P.M. at the “Nutman” on the corner of Hwy. 175 & Hubertus Road. All are welcome!

January 15, 2020 – “Virgil Wanderer” by Leif Enger

February 19, 2020 – “Coop” by Michael Perry

March 18, 2020 - “The Dutch House” by Ann Pratchett

April 15, 2020 – “The Invisible Thread” by Laura Schroff and Alex Tresniowski

Sponsors & Goods/Services Donors

Sponsors for our events and Good/Services donors are a very important and appreciated element of the operation of the Richfield Historical Society. The support of these contributors enables the Society to continue the projects which preserve the history of the Village of Richfield and to share it with current and future generations.

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Roskopf's RV Center (Use of Camper-Thresheree)
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Ray Wollner Excavating (excavation)
Speedy Metals (steel)
Wissota Sand & Gravel (aggregate)
Zignego (concrete)

Thresheree - Silent Auction (Items valued at \$100 or more)

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Richfield Historical Society
Richfield Service, Inc.
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