



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

Officers *President* *Recording/Corresponding Secretary* *Treasurer* *Past President*
 Pete Samson Joni Crivello Lois Hessenhauer Susan Sawdey

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Committees

Blacksmith Shop
 Kathy Lauenstein

Fall 2022 V25N3

Collections
 Deanna Einwalter

The Rest of the Buildings – Lois Hessenhauer

Education
 Kathy Weberg

The Mill, Sawmill and Mill House were by far the most important buildings in the Messer/Mayer Homestead which is located in the Richfield Historical Park. However, there were several other buildings on the property, some still standing and some long gone.

Event Coordinator
 Daryl Grier

Historic Sites
 Quint Mueller/ Herb Lofy



Left to Right:
 Pig Barn
 Agriculture Barn
 Wood Shed
 Buggy Shed Location ■
 Out House
 Smoke House

Library/Program/ Newsletter
 Marge Holzbog/
 Connie Thoma

LWC Welcome
 Ruth Jeffords

Marketing
 Doug Wenzel

Membership
 Dorothy Marks

Mill House
 Clara Birkel/Cindy
 Schmechel

Mill Restoration
 Al Mayer

Woodshed

The woodshed, located south of the house, is of frame construction and may have been built around 1900. It was used to store firewood for the main wood stove and for the cook stove. It is often said by the “old timers” that wood always warmed a person three times. First, trees would be cut down a couple of years prior to use which would warm you. Second, you got warm cutting and splitting it, and finally, you got warm when it was actually burned in the stove.

*Pioneer Homestead /
 Long Range Planning*
 Susan Sawdey

Project Coordinator
 Al Mayer

Also inside the woodshed was a pigeon loft. Carol Mayer Woods, the granddaughter of C.W. and Maryanne Mayer, used to love to go into the pigeon loft to read and listen to the soothing coo of the gentle birds.

Volunteer Coordinator
 Sharon Lofy

According to the Bob Woods (husband of Carol Woods), the woodshed was always strictly used for storage of wood and kerosene. The wood was cut and split outside and tossed in through the south window. They needed to cut enough wood to make it through all the cold months. Once tossed in through the window, the wood was left there to dry out during the summer. There was also a big 100-gallon kerosene tank in the woodshed that stored the fuel that was used in the stove in the sitting room. The woodshed now houses a butchering display, old tools and shoemaking artifacts.

A hand-dug water well is located in front of the woodshed. Because there was never any running water in the house, water had to be pumped and carried into the house for drinking, cooking and laundry. Here you meet George Mayer, the last mill operator, getting a pail of water to take into the house for his cooking and drinking needs. This picture was taken March of 1971 when George was 81 years old.

Smoke House

South of the woodshed is a small wood frame smoke house. Prior to refrigeration, it was common to smoke or cure the meat to preserve it for a longer period of time.

*George Mayer, 81,
pumping water in
1971*



A small fire, mostly of hickory or apple wood, would be built. The wood needed to burn slowly, producing a lot of heat and smoke. After several days, the heat and smoke would cook and cure the meat. This would greatly extend the amount of time the meat could be stored. There is a display of meat smoking during some RHS events.

Farm Barn

The barn located just west of the house is of the post and beam type construction. The lower level is constructed of fieldstone held in place by lime mortar. The walls are two feet thick and smooth on both sides. The heavy walls were necessary to carry the weight of the barn frame and large amounts of hay, grain and machinery stored on the upper floor. The walls were constructed in such a way that the inner and outer shells were smooth and solid with a hollow air space in between. The air space provided some extra insulation to keep the winter cold out. The lower level was used for housing the animals and was at ground level. The barn was built into the hillside so that it was very easy to drive wagons and machinery on to the threshing floor (second floor.) Barns that were built on flat land would have an inclined ramp up to the second floor, hence the name "bank barn" for this general type of barn.



*George & Milton Mayer on a hay wagon
in the barn in 1918.*

It is not known exactly when the original barn was constructed, but it is very similar to barns in the area that were constructed in the late 1800s and early 1900s. In the fall of 1910, an addition was added to the north end of the barn. It was constructed to provide a new chicken coop on the lower level and storage space for machinery on the upper level.

The early settlers had a lot of work to provide shelter and food for their families but not much is mentioned about the work required to provide shelter and food for their animals. The animals were very important, horses provided transportation and power to clear the land, plant and harvest crops. The cattle provided milk and meat. Many farmers were accused of taking better care of the farm animals than their families.

The cow barn is a nice place to be during the cold and snowy winter months. The combination of body heat and humidity from a barn full of cows makes it feel warm and comfortable in the barn even at below zero temperatures.

At higher temperatures, it easily becomes too warm and humid in the barn for the best health of the animals, so doors and windows need to be opened to provide ventilation.

The area west and south of the barn was used as a pasture for the cows. The creek provided water and some trees provided shade, making it comfortable for the cows. If the grass got too tall in the orchard, the cows would be moved to that area to eat the grass. Inside the barn today, there is a workshop and a museum.



Pig Barn & Out House

Farm operations very rarely stood still. As time and money allowed, more out buildings were constructed for special uses. One of those was the pig barn. Pigs were another important part of the farm. They provided another source of income when sold. The pig barn no longer stands, but the concrete foundation is still visible. It was a two-story wood frame building. The lower level housed the pigs, and the upper level was used for storage.

Out House

The “necessary house” or out house is the two-hole style. It is the farthest building southwest of the house.

Buggy Shed

A buggy shed located south of the barn was a simple wood frame building used to house the buggy when it was not being used. The buggy was pulled by a single horse named Florrie and used by the family for travel, mainly to special events. The shed no longer stands.



Mrs. C.W. Mayer with Florrie



Horse Shed

Horse Shed Across from the mill was a horse shed. After the grain was delivered to the mill and the customers were waiting for it to be ground, the horses were sheltered from the heat or inclement weather in the horse shed. A replica of the horse shed has been built by Richfield Historical Society volunteers.

Through the efforts of the Society, several of the “outbuildings” that were an important part of the Messer/Mayer Homestead are standing and in great condition. The ones that are no longer part of the Homestead served their purpose and should still be remembered.

George Wilbur Peck

George Wilbur Peck was an American writer and politician from Wisconsin. He was the 29th Mayor of Milwaukee serving from April 1890 to November 1890. **He became the 17th Governor of Wisconsin serving from 1891 to 1895, the very heydays of the Messer Mayer Mill.**

Peck was born in 1840 in Henderson, New York, the oldest of three children of David B. and Alzina P. (Joslin) Peck. In 1843, the family moved to Cold Springs, Wisconsin (located between Waukesha and Dane counties.) Peck attended public school until the age 15 when he was apprenticed to the printing trade. He married Francena Rowley in 1860, and they had two sons. He died in 1916 and is buried at Forest Home Cemetery in Milwaukee.

Peck gained a national reputation as a newspaper publisher founding newspapers in Ripon and La Crosse, Wisconsin. His La Crosse newspaper, *The Sun*, was founded in 1874. In 1876, he moved the newspaper to Milwaukee, renaming it *Peck's Sun*. The weekly newspaper contained peck's humorous writings, in the Twain tradition, including his famous "Peck's Bad Boy" stories.



George W. Peck

SHALL THERE BE HUGGING IN THE PARK **from "Peck's Sunshine" by George W. Peck copyright 1882**

"The law-abiding people of this community were startled on Tuesday, and the greatest indignation prevailed at an editorial article in the *Sentinel* denouncing the practice of hugging in the parks. The article went on to show that the placing of seats in the parks leads to hugging, and *The Sentinel* editor denounced hugging in the most insane manner possible.

The Sun does not desire to enter politics, but when a great constitutional question like this comes up, it will be found on the side of the weak against the strong.

The Sentinel advises the removal of the seats from the park because hugging is done on them. Great heavens! Has it come to this? Are the dearest rights of the American citizen to be abridged in this summary manner? Let us call the attention of that powerful paper to a clause in the Declaration of Independence, which asserts "All men are created free and equal, endowed with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." When the framers of this great Declaration of Independence were at work on that clause, they must have had in view the pastime of hugging in the parks.

Hugging is certainly a "pursuit of happiness." People do not hug for wages – that is except on the stage. Nobody is obliged to hug. It is sort of a spontaneous combustion, as it were, of the feelings and has to have proper conditions of the atmosphere to make it a success. Parties who object to hugging are old, usually, and have been satiated, and are like a lemon that has done duty in circus lemonade. If they had a job of hugging, they would want to hire a man to do it for them.

A man who objects to a little natural, soul-inspiring hugging on a back seat in a park, of an evening, with a fountain throwing water all over the cast-iron cupids, has probably got a soul, but he hasn't got it with him. To the student of nature there is no sight more beautiful than to see a flock of young people take seats in a park, after the sun has gone down to bed in the west and the moon has pulled a fleecy cloud over her face for a veil, so as not to disturb the worshippers.

A couple, one a male and the other a female, will sit far apart on the cast-iron seat for a moment, when the young lady will try to fix a cloak over her shoulders, and she can't fix it, and then the young man will help her, and when he has got it fixed he will go off and leave one arm around the small of her back. He will miss his arm, and wonder where he left it, and go back after it, and in the dark he will feel around with the other hand to find the hand he

left, and suddenly the two hands will meet. They will express astonishment, and clasp each other, and be so glad that they will begin to squeeze, and the chances are that they will cut the girl in two, but they never do. Under such circumstances, a girl can exist on less atmosphere than when she is doing a washing.

There is just so much hugging that has to be done, and the *Sentinel* should remember that very many people do not have facilities at their homes for such soul-stirring work, and they are obliged to flee to the parks, or to the woods, where the beneficent government has provided all modern improvements.

Hugging is as necessary to the youth of the land as medicine to the sick, and instead of old persons, whose days of kitten-hood are over, throwing cold water upon the science of hugging, they should encourage it by all legitimate means.

When, in strolling through the parks, you run onto a case of sporadic hugging, instead of making a noise on the gravel walk, to cause the hugging to stop, you should trace your steps noiselessly, get behind a tree, and see how long they can stand it without dying.

Instead of removing the cast-iron seats from the parks, we should be in favor of furnishing reserved seats for old people, so they can sit and watch the hugging. It doesn't do any hurt to hug.

People think it unhealthy, but nobody was ever known to catch a cold while hugging. It is claimed by some that young people who stay out nights and hug are not good for anything the next day. There is something to this; but if they didn't get any hugging, they wouldn't be worth a cent any time. They would all the time be looking for it.

No good Mr. *Sentinel*, on behalf of fifty thousand young people who have no organ to make known their wants, we ask you to stay your hand, and do not cause the seats to be removed from the parks. Remember how many there are who have to learn the noble art of hugging, and give them a chance."

President

Pete Samson

Hello! I'm sure you'll all agree that it's been nice having a relatively normal year again.

As you are aware, we will continue to celebrate our 25th anniversary throughout the year.

Our membership has increased, and we are continuing to add new events. The Behind the Scenes Day was a big success. Members and guests were able to access some otherwise less accessible areas of our buildings. We will do this again next year opening it up to the public as well as members. We will be adding two new events this year, Hammer-In Blacksmith Days, October 1st and a Luminary Walk November 5th. Be sure to mark your calendar for both events.

We are currently evaluating the need for additional building space to display and store equipment that is currently stored off site. We don't know how long the current spaces will be available to us; and, therefore, are planning ahead while we have time to make decisions.

Next year we will celebrate the Messer/Mayer Mill and its 150-year anniversary. By celebrating the Mill and Park and opening our buildings in a unique way, we are promoting the History of the Village of Richfield.

Finally, a huge Thank You to all of our volunteers. We could not accomplish any of this without you!

Blacksmith Shop

Kathy Lauenstein

The blacksmithing craft is not only a profession but a means of artistic exploration and expression.

Hammer control - Find a good hammer, and the more you use it on steel your work should show improvement and creative ideas should come.

Finding a design is as simple as looking around at leaves, flowers, and branches of a tree. Check around the house. Sometimes it just takes a trip to the scrap yard looking in the steel pile to find different shapes and ideas flow.

If you want to learn how metal moves, get some clay from the craft store. Shape it into a bar. With a ball-peen hammer, hammer the clay and watch how the clay moves. Carve a face, add the eye. Like carving in wood; we carve in metal. A blacksmith is a tool maker, and to get the job done he needs the right equipment. Tools need to be made.

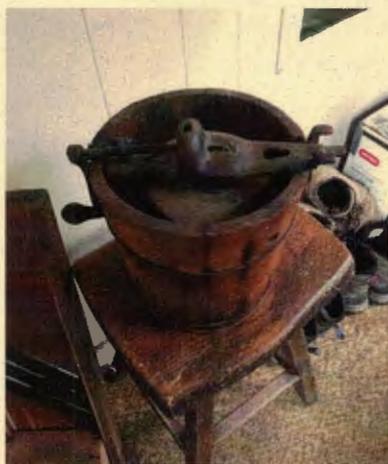
Please join us at our new event – Blacksmith Hammer-In Day October 1, 2022.

Collections

Deanna Einwalter

This Spring/Summer we took a few nice pieces into our collection. One piece was an ice cream churn and the other is a historic old saw that was driven from a tractor. To any woodworker this saw was a welcome addition compared to sawing by hand.

We continue to work on cleaning and organizing the Museum along with totally revamping the Wood Shed displays. Both these projects will give great enthusiasm to our park.



Ice Cream Churn



Tractor Driven Saw

Education

Kathy Weberg

The Education Committee is responsible for our “traveling trunk” which has been featured in past newsletter articles. We have four trunks and really are in need of creating a fifth trunk. There is one senior facility that keeps calling us for a program, and we've already taken a trunk twice and also pulled together personal items to enhance our presentation.

Antique items that work well are those that are small enough to fit in a “trunk,” really a suitcase, but large enough for people to see easily. Examples are: rug beaters, cameras, old baseball uniforms, insulators from old power poles and so on. If you have any antique items that you would be willing to donate to the cause, please let me know. They will be very much appreciated!

Event Coordinator**Daryl Grier**

What a year we have going! We had record attendance at Maple Syrup Family Day. Art at the Mill was also a great success!

We will have two new events this year: the Blacksmith Hammer- In at the Blacksmith Shop Saturday October 1, 2022, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. and a Luminary Walk in the Park, November 5, 2022, More information will be on the RHS website.

We do advertise our events, but the **BEST** advertising is done by **YOU!** So tell your friends, family & neighbors about what is happening at RHS. Better yet, bring them to our events!

Planning, that's what the Events Committee does. At our meetings, we review the last event; make notes for improving it next year and go over things to be done for the next activity. We have a worksheet for each event so we have a good foundation to complete the process. At our next meeting, we will be focusing on the next two events, Blacksmith Hammer-In Day and the Luminary Walk. If you have ideas for an event, please join us or give me a call Daryl Grier, 262 628-4221 dgrier@charter.net

Looking for a home for unwanted household items? Silent auction items, household treasurers and books are needed for the Silent Auction and Sweets 'n Stuff tents at the Threshere and Harvest Festival.

- A Silent Auction will be held on both Saturday & Sunday.
- Household treasurers (rummage) & books will be sold at Sweets 'n Stuff.
If you are not sure where your item(s) fit, not to worry as we'll make the best use of your donation.

Items can be dropped off at Daryl Grier's dgrier@charter.net 262 628-4221, 1179 Wejegi Dr, or Sharon Lofy's 4434 Pleasant Hill Rd hsl1725@yahoo.com (262) 297-1546.

We need your baked goods to be sold at the Sweets 'n Stuff Threshere tent.

Let Daryl Grier know if you are able to bake: cookies, bars, brownies etc.

- Note: 2 cookies to a bag
or one brownie or fudge, **about 3"** square to a bag.

Drop your sweets off at Daryl Grier's or Sharon Lofy's or bring them to the Threshere on Saturday or Sunday a. m. Daryl: 262 628-4221, 1179 or Wejegi Dr, / Sharon 262 297-1546 4434 Pleasant Hill Road.

Art at the Mill – 2022 – Lois Hessenauer

"What a gorgeous rug"! --"That necklace is perfect for my sister"! -- "That music soothes my soul." These were just a few of the comments overheard at the 14th Art at the Mill held on June 18th at the Richfield Historical Park. It was a perfect summer day; 90 exhibitor tents were in place and over 1,400 people wandered the beautiful grounds.

The attendees enjoyed buying that special handmade item, bidding on something unique in the Silent Auction tent and revisiting the past in the historic buildings. While listening to the jazz melodies of VIVO, they nibbled a croissant filled



Gorgeous Rugs

with chicken salad or a BBQ slider provided by the Richfield Lions.

A Thank You to all exhibitors, volunteers and attendees. All proceeds for this event go to the Richfield Historical Society projects. Mark your calendars now for the 15th Art at the Mill – June 17, 2023.

Historic Sites

Quint Mueller/Herb Lofy

Again another year has quickly passed with projects completed in the Historical Park. Among those are the exterior of the Engine Shed and major clearing around the Park. One area cleared is adjacent to the log sawing area. This gives better visibility and increases the work area. The Thursday crew did the brush clearing while Tim and Deanna Einwalter spearheaded the work of rock and stump removal. The area has been seeded and looks great. The paver bricks at the Welcome Center have the permanent sand installed which will prevent moss and weed invasion. We also need to recognize Dave Reich and Don Robb for clipping the grass in the Park and Dorothy Marks for her feminine touch of trimming around the Welcome Center.

The Sites Committee is responsible for addressing the many maintenance issues in the Park. Presently the failing Mill House paint is the focus. Much time invested in research and discussion has yielded a proposal. Along with the paint, it was decided that the exterior electrical should be updated before the paint is applied. These projects are slated for next year. It is important to remember that the Sites Committee is basically the “clearing house” for proposed additions, renovations and changes. Their proposals are then brought before the RHS Board for approval.

On the Threshere, a crew of volunteers (mostly nonmembers) loaded the grain bundles Saturday August 6. Among those present was RHS member Reinhold Lofy visiting from Trier Germany. He pitched ceremonial sheaves on the wagon. I guess we can say that the Richfield Historical Society truly is an international organization.

Library/Newsletter/Programs

Marge Holzbog/Connie Thoma

Thank you so much for the 76 responses we received to the survey concerning this newsletter which you received in your last newsletter. In summary, the responses were as follows:

Preserving history 54	Wish to receive the newsletter electronically 12
Read the newsletter front to back 67	Wish to keep in touch electronically 39
Wish to receive the newsletter by US Mail 59	

Given the above responses, we will continue mailing the newsletter to you. It is our plan to redo the survey in a couple of years. It is likely at that time more may well like to receive it electronically.

Again, we Thank You!

The Threshere is just around the corner. We invite you to stop at the History Room at LWC. Our swing board has a display of advertising from early postcards to magazine advertising and everything in between. Also on display are early maps of Richfield Township – an early survey map, 1859, 1873, 1892 and 1915. A collection of early books has recently been added.

We hope to see you there!

Please see page 14 for our fall Community Program lineup from Connie Thoma.



LWC Welcome Center

Ruth Jeffords

It's the perfect blend! A visit to the inside of the Welcome Center invites the visitor to peek at times past with its displays of items from great - and great-great-grandparents' lives. Take a walk outside of the Welcome Center to see the 'new old' items such as the herb garden that made its debut this spring and is currently in its full glory. Our garden contains herbs commonly grown in a homestead's kitchen garden.



Herb Garden

Herbs

Before freezers and dehydrators, spices and herbs were dried in a well-ventilated, darkened room. When the leaves or seeds were dry, they were packed in glass containers that could be tightly closed. Herbal vinegars were another way of preserving and enjoying summer's herbs and spices. Drying herbs in the sun, or in a warm, dry place until they were completely crisp and crumbly allowed them to be stored in canisters in the same way coffee, sugar, and tea were counter-top available.

Canisters? Air-tight, different sized canisters made convenient containers for herbs and spices that were used to create a family's meals. Step into the kitchen area at the Welcome Center to see the vintage canister set donated to us by Karla O'Leary. These canisters were part of a larger set and were used for coffee, spices, noodles, sugar, and poppy seeds. The delicate gold inlay on each canister denotes in German the name of the item inside.

From the garden to the table! A visit to the Welcome Center blends the past with the 'new old.'

Be sure to stop by the Welcome Center during the Threshereer to take a walk-through history. Kids are invited to play old-time games. Our engaging volunteers are excited to see all children, including children at heart, enjoying themselves!

Vintage Canisters



Marketing

Doug Wenzel

The addition of two new events, Blacksmith Day Hammer-In and the Luminary Walk, means lots of marketing to do. Perhaps this is a good time for a quick review of the various marketing initiatives that we've taken on.

Let's start with what I'll call traditional media, which I define as anything that involves paper. We create and maintain stocks of two different brochures: the membership brochure and the "three-ups" brochure. These are available in the Park information boxes and at our booth during park events. Both include listings of our events and must be updated when new events are added.

As an event draws near, we create a press release for distribution to local newspapers. We've gotten some excellent exposure from articles in our local papers and are very grateful for this. We also appreciate the

support of the Village of Richfield, for allowing us to submit articles for the Richfield Happenings newsletter.

While we like to take advantage of all the free advertising we can get, we do also purchase placement of a limited number of paid ads (of our creation) in local papers.

Of course, we add a good deal of social media to our marketing mix. We maintain pages on Facebook and Pinterest, and keep these sites updated continuously. Other online presences include the official RHS website, a treasure trove of information about the Society and the Park. We also manage the Historical Park listing at Google Maps, where we have an outstanding rating of 4.8/5.

Other online work includes creating and updating entries in the various event calendars, of which there are about 20.

All these efforts require generating lots of text and taking lots of pictures, and my sincere thanks go out to our volunteers who keep it all going!

Membership

Dorothy Marks

Since this is our last newsletter for 2022, I wish to say "Thank You" to all past, present and new members. You are the reason for our success!

Several months ago a professional quilter/seamstress offered to donate, free of charge, items to be sold at the Welcome Center. Since this could not happen due to the lack of space, I thought about utilizing the Horse Shed. I passed the idea on to several people as well as the Welcome Center Committee. We then discussed the possibility of turning the Horse Shed into a boutique in time for the Threshere. Our intentions are to market things whereby this would benefit the Welcome Center. Our members jumped on board and thus the LWC'S BOUTIQUE AT THE HORSE SHED was born. So please stop in.

We have been having fun working together and sharing ideas; the enthusiasm is very gratifying. We will have a nice variety of items which will be provided by very talented individuals.

If you have not yet attended the Threshere, plan on doing so . . . it is a wonderful experience spending a day at the Richfield Historical Park.

Mill House

Clara Birkel/Cindy Schmechel

The Mill House has been busy this year, celebrating the Richfield Historical Society's 25th Anniversary. We are looking forward to several new events at the Park and to the 2022 Threshere. We are always happy to welcome new guests who come to visit the House and to show off our wonderful displays of the original, beautiful Victorian parlor furniture, vintage quilts, original family items including clothing, toys, musical instruments, photos, furniture and much more.

This year's special display at the Mill House will be a solemn affair; a late Victorian funeral setting in the formal parlor with a vintage wicker display coffin and stand. During the 19th century death was a constant companion. People died of disease, lack of medical care, inadequate food supplies, poor sanitary conditions, farm or mill accidents, fire and war. The most common causes of death for men were accidents; and for women, the most common cause of death was complications related to childbirth. The average person's life span was around 50 years of age, and the mortality rate for children was especially high. One third of all children died before the age of 10 years old. Commonly, most Victorian parents did not even name their children until they reached their first birthday.

Funerals were not usually a morbid affair in the Victorian age; but much like today, it was a celebration of the loved one's life and achievements. Remembering the dead was very important, and many people did not fear death as much as they feared not having a "proper" funeral and burial. Most funerals were held at home, and it was customary to prepare the home for the "death watch," the time between dying and the funeral when family and friends would come to pay their respects. The home would have been decorated with black crepe, and flowers would have surrounded the coffin, which was a visual reminder of the respect and prestige given to the deceased.

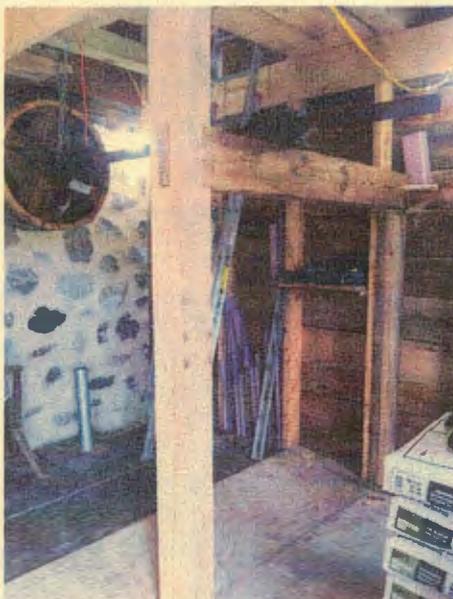
We hope that you will join us, come to pay your respects to our loved one and visit the Messer/Mayer Mill House during the Threshere. We look forward to greeting new friends and connecting with old friends.

Mill Restoration

Al Mayer

Things are starting to take shape over at the Mill and Engine Shed out here at the Richfield Historical Park. The stonework on the foundation is a slow and deliberate process, and the preparation of the siding is just as time consuming. However, I think you'll agree that the results are worthwhile. The west and south side walls are complete, and soon fill can be brought in to finish the grade. Meanwhile, work will continue on the east side.

Inside the Engine Shed things are also moving ahead. The clutch shaft is elevated into place, and permanent beams are now supporting it. The timber framework that guides the belt from the clutch shaft to the turbine shaft is being cut and fitted together along with the frame that maintains the tension on the belt.



Clutch Shaft



Engine Shed

There are other items like sheaves and carriers that all have to be built from scratch, with certain woods being used for certain items. Over the past couple of Thresherees, we've been cutting lumber in preparation of reconstructing these different parts.

Now as the construction of the Engine Shed is nearing completion, it seems that the reality of our grist mill running is closer than ever.

If you're as excited as we are about seeing this become a reality, come on out to the Park on a Thursday or Sunday morning and let's have a conversation!

The Engine Shed will be open during the Threshere, as well as the Mill. So stop in and see the things that are being made and added, piece by piece to bring our mill back to life.

Scrub A Dub Dub

RHS Pioneer Homestead Lard Soap

The Pioneer Homestead made its last batch of our not-so-famous lard soap in 2019. Our young visitors have been using it to wash clothes. So it's time to make a new batch.

For many years, I thought that soap making was too hard and too frightening. It turns out that making soap is neither hard, frightening nor expensive.

Pioneers would never waste anything. So animal fat, that we routinely throw away, would be saved and rendered to be used later in soap making. During our annual Maple Syrup Family Day, the Pioneer Homestead renders lard to be used throughout the year. Youngsters participate in grinding pig fat before it is rendered down in our cauldron over an open fire. The low heat slowly melts the fat which is skimmed off and poured through cheesecloth as it is loaded into our crocks. We store the crocks in a cool spot until needed.

Lard soap is wonderfully creamy and good for your skin. It will condition and moisturize skin like no other soap; and the best part is that we made it, so we know exactly what we put into it. Some are concerned that animal fat makes soap greasy and clogs pores. The opposite is true. Lard resembles the structure of human skin cells which is composed of saturated fats. Lard soap is closer to our skin than plant-based soaps. Our Pioneer Homestead Bar is also good for removing stains in laundry and cleansing poison ivy on the skin.

Another ingredient in our lard soap is lye. We have an ashery replica (lye making container) at the Pioneer Homestead; but unlike seasoned pioneers, we have not perfected the art of lye making.

Even though lye is a very harsh chemical when mixed with water, pioneers would make lye from scratch by placing hardwood ash over a layer of pebbles and three inches of straw. Then they would gently pour rainwater over the layers and collect the acidic water from the bottom. To test for the right pH, they would place a potato in the water. If the potato would sink, the lye water was not ready; and it would be run through the ashery again until the potato floated.

Our Lard Soap Laundry Bars will be available for purchase at the LWC's Boutique at the Horse Shed during the Threshere!

Pioneer Homestead Laundry Bar 100% Lard Soap

INGREDIENTS

- 600 grams lard
- 80 grams lye (sodium hydroxide)
- 228 grams distilled water



Pioneer Homestead Bar

Project Coordinator**Al Mayer**

We've had a very active spring and summer this year and are quickly moving into fall, with no signs of slowing down.

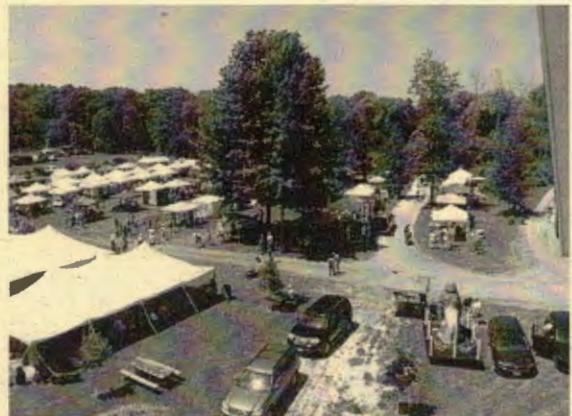
Spring was a time to clear many of the dead trees that lined the Pleasant Hill driveway and endangered the power lines to the Park. The area between the barn and creek was also cleaned of the dead and fallen timber. This then provided us with the opportunity to cut and split over four cords of firewood to replenish the supply at the Sugar Shack for next year's maple syrup production.

Through the spring, we've added lighting features to the pioneer buildings and blacksmith shop to better view their demonstrations. Many areas were cleaned in preparation for the "Behind the Scenes" event that we had on July 17th. We've also been able to devote a group to focus specifically on Mill projects. Other noted projects include a new water tank at the garden and a new coat of paint on the privy and table trailer.

**Water Tank**

We do spend a bit of time working on different projects, but in the morning and at break time, there's more than a dozen guys conversing, talking about whatever - kind of like car guys...at McDonald's...but with a purpose. A great sense of community!!

Putting on events like Art at the Mill and our Threshere and Harvest Festival involves setting up the Park with the layout, the tents, booths, parking lot, etc. and putting everything away after the event. Many hands make the work much easier. Good weather is always a bonus. Working with a group of people that offer and are eager to help and accomplish these tasks is an inspiration and the heart of what makes this organization breathe.

**Event Layout**

Anyone who would like to take a chance and see what we're doing, come on out to the Park on a Thursday morning, before noon, and visit. Treats are @ 9:45!! If Sunday is a better fit for you 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., you'll find a crew that can help you learn more about your local park.

Volunteer Coordinator**Sharon Lofy**

How is it possible that we need to focus on September already??? The RHS Annual 23rd Threshere and Harvest Festival will be featuring the Sugar Shack this year. Mark September 17th & 18th on your calendar.

Get out your pie pans. There will be Pie Contest both days. Have your pie at the Pie Tent by 10 a.m. and judging is at 10:30 a.m. No cream pies. We do not have refrigeration for them.

Check your household items. There might be some items that you no longer need. Sweets 'n' Stuff is always looking for household items, books and baked treats. (Give Daryl a call at 262-628-4221.) There will be a wonderful Silent Auction Tent with a variety of items to bid on.

There are a few time changes in both daily schedules. The tractor parade will be at 1 p.m. both days. Threshing will be at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Plowing demonstrations will be 11:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Saturday and 11:30 a.m. on Sunday.

New this year is the LWC'S Boutique located in the Horse Shed north of the Mill. It will offer many fine items for sale. The Lillicrapp Welcome Center Historical Room has a lot of Richfield information to share along with visiting the General Store. The Messer/Mayer Mill and Mill House tours are a must to check out what has changed from last year. The Blacksmith Shop will be busy with the sounds of hammering. The Pioneer Homestead will keep hands busy making corn husk dolls and apple cider vinegar. Let's not forget the Sugar Shack which is this year's feature. Try out their maple cotton candy. Check the kid's area. There are many activities to help kids keep busy in the Kid's Zone. There will also be activities at the Mill and other areas around the Park. The American Truck Historical Society Beer City Chapter Exhibit will be present.

Be sure to spend some time watching the threshing, log sawing, horse demonstrations and tractor plowing. Encampments will be setup... WWI, WWII and more. Small engines will be on display. Check out the Lion's Food Stand, Sweet Corn Tent, Ice Cream and Beverage Tent, Kettle Korn Stand and more. There will be many other exhibitors and vendors throughout the Park. Some are return favorites along with new additions.

Every year we hope you can join us as a spectator or a volunteer. You will be receiving an email listing where we will need a helping hand. Please consider helping. It is greatly appreciated. Perhaps you know of someone that would like to volunteer. Let me know at 262-297-1546. Pass our volunteer need on to your children or grandchildren. This is a fun way for them to complete their community hours that are required.

A+++ for Richfield Historical Society's VOLUNTEERS!!!

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS – Connie Thoma

7:00 P.M. Free. Refreshments served

Richfield Fire Station, Highway 175

September 22, 2022

Speaker – David Wiedenkeller

Topic - Colonel Francis Kelley, Commander of the Green Berets in Vietnam

October 27, 2022

Speaker –Mary Franz

Topic – The Venerable Fire Collection Museum - Slinger, Wisconsin

November 17, 2022

Speaker – Jessica Michna

Topic – Katherine Wright Those Fly Boys from Dayton