

Iowa County History

Brought to you by the Iowa County Historical Society

Volume XXXII

No. 2

April 2007

Potpourri

What a season here at ICHS. Some days we walk into our little museum to find it simply buzzing with activity. A few days ago the Editor counted 7 members and Directors working on data entry, the Cheese Factory book and other research which previously languished for lack of help.

Correction

The first prize courtesy of Farmers Savings Bank on the Auction Raffle ticket drawing is a \$500 bond, not \$300 as printed on the tickets.

A little bitty misprint tripped us up.

Ice Cream Social

July 13, 2007 ... 4:30 - 7:30

At the museum

Music-Food-Friends

A recent survey showed that the public understood the reach and influence of local museums better than media and community leaders in the same communities! Talk it up.

Auction

Saturday April 14
Ley Pavilion
Harris Park
Dodgeville
10 am to Completion

Consign - Bid
Have Fun
4 H Lunch on Grounds

Books
Artifacts
A huge
variety of useful and
fascinating items

Buy Raffle Tickets
See page 2

All to support
our Museum addition

Call soon to have your auc-
tion donations picked up by
volunteers listed on Page 2.

ICHS Directors

Alice Griffiths, Pres.	935-0574
Boyd Geer, VP	930-9084
John Hess, Sec.	588-7082
Marie Sersch, Treas.	935-5752
Eileen Arndt	935-2623
Helen Radtke	987-2892
Therese McCarrager	967-2232
Tom Wilson	935-7707
Neil Giffey, Editor	935-5557
giffey@mhtc.net	

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Lauded**

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Melva Phillips Lauded at Dinner Dance

Not much remains to be said about retiring ICHS Board member **Melva Phillips**. Whether serious, emotional or humorous, it all came to the fore February 18 at the annual dinner-dance. As the crowd finished a first rate buffet dinner, Melva became the deserved center of attention. **Alice Griffiths**, **Marie Sersch** and **Neil Giffey** alternately praised and roasted



L—R. Helen Radtke, Melva Phillips, Alice Griffiths as Alice presents a crystal vase as a token of appreciation for 30 years of dedicated service to the Iowa County Historical Society

the honored guest before about 125 members and boosters at **Chandlers** in **Mineral Point**. Many in the gathering congratulated her in a more private fashion. Supported by a delegation of family members, Melva accepted the plaudits calmly and perhaps with some embarrassment. Melva was presented with a lead crystal vase with an inscription honoring her 30 years of dedicated service to the Society. She was admonished again and again to continue her diligent research and outreach to our citizens. As expected she ventured into the museum the very next day, a Monday, and went into high gear on her preferred lifestyle, digging into local history.

Melva is writing her autobiography. All this writer knows is that she had three uncles who rode with Custer in the West. They survived. Ponder how slender her bloodline would be in 2007 if those uncles had ridden to work that fatal day at the Little Big Horn a little too close to General Custer. We do hope that she writes something of her dedicated service to Iowa County history. Anyway ... February 18, 2007 was a memorable day for all who love fun, food and family connections and not necessarily in that order. Just know Melva that "We'll Keep a Welcome" for you at ICHS.

Where to Call for:

Auction Item Pickup & Raffle Tickets

Tom Wilson 935-7707
Jack & Marian Reynolds 935-5196
Helen Radtke 987-2982
ICHS Museum 935-7694
Bob Thomas 935-5446
Any ICHS Director
All area code 608

Raffle Tickets

Farmers Savings Bank - All Branches
Peoples Bank - Barneveld
Royal Bank - Cobb & Avoca
Anchor Bank
Highland State Bank
Larry's Service, Linden
Dodgeville C of C -M & I Bank Dodgeville
Any Director

History of the Hodgson Family— A Tribute

Used with the permission of Bea Sawle Pennington, this interesting family history is a portion of the Sawle-Hodgson Family history archived at the Society. It is the recorded product of several generations of proud and devoted family members.

Editor.

The surname Hodgson is common in England, Canada, Australia and, no doubt, other countries in the British Commonwealth of Nations. It occurs three times on the maternal side of Queen Elizabeth II's genealogy. The branch from which we in this record stem had its roots in northeastern England. The name Hodgson appears in Genealogy of George Washington, Robert E. Lee and Winston Churchill.



Richard Hodgson

Richard Hodgson was born February 25, 1797 in Barmston, near Bridlington, near Hull in Yorkshire, England. Death by a plague took both parents in the same year, leaving him an orphan at a tender age. He had brothers and sisters but after separation of the family, a brother John was the only relative he was able to remember.

This brother was a drummer and musician in the British Army under the Duke of Wellington. He was present at the battle of Waterloo (1815). He came home in broken health and needing care, sought and found his brother Richard and wife with whom he lived until death from tuberculosis released him. With tear-filled eyes, Richard often related his brother's experiences on the eve of Waterloo. John had told him that though the earth trembled with the moving of heavy artillery, the soldiers sang "Annie Laurie" far into the night.

Richard earned his livelihood as a farm laborer. In his early years, he was often cold and hungry but he toiled diligently and somehow grew in strength and stature. He was a blue-eyed, dark-haired man about six feet tall and very muscular. His son, Francis, said that his father was able to stand on a bushel measure and put four bushels of wheat on his back. He excelled at many athletic feats and was an expert with the scythe, sickle, flail and axe. Finally he became a foreman on the estate of Lord Greyson. The experience gained there enabled him to become a successful farmer when he came to America.

He had little opportunity for book learning but loved to listen to sermons, speeches and good reading. He could recite long passages from the Bible with ease. In an argument on politics or religion, he was fluent. English ballads and the hymns of the church were his special joy. His voice was a sweet tenor. At about the age of twenty-three, he saw **Jane Wright**, daughter of George and Margaret Wright, as she strolled along the beach at Bridlington and fell in love



Jane Wright

at first sight with the brown eyed, auburn-haired lassie. They were married June 17, 1820. To this union, twelve children were born. Their second child, a son, George died in infancy. Family records can be found in Holy Trinity Church, Barmston, England. Times were hard in Great Britain during the 1840's. News of the discovery of lead in **Iowa County, Wisconsin**

Territory, interested many Englishmen and possibly helped the Hodgsons in deciding to come to this area. Another factor was the dread of sending so many sons to war. There were political questions, too, with which the father could not agree, particularly the question of the separation of church and state. He was strongly in favor of the American idea and so the decision was made to find a home in the United States.

In 1844 and '45 there was a great exodus of discontented people. Many came to this area under the auspices of the British Temperance and Emigration Society which had been organized in Liverpool. The family was connected with this organization.

Hard as times were, Richard, his frugal wife and older children must have saved a nice "nest egg." Think of the sum it must have taken to transplant a family numbering thirteen to a strange country so far from the motherland!

Their two oldest sons, **John** and **William**, emigrated first in the early spring of 1845. A letter is preserved which tells of their trip to Canada, through the Great Lakes to Milwaukee and then on to **Blue Mounds** by team. They spent some time at the **Ebenezer Brigham Hotel**. Then they walked from Blue Mounds along **Blue Ridge in Iowa County** in a

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Hodgson

(Continued from page 3)

Northwest direction toward the Wisconsin River. What a view met their eyes! The time was early June, 1845. They followed the ridge until they came to the fertile valley which is the lowest eastern branch of **Mill Creek Valley** in what is now the town of **Arena**, Wisconsin. A vast tract of land was staked out and claims paid at **Mineral Point** then the county seat and location of the government land office.

Pleasant Valley, which was to belong largely to the Hodgson family, was very scenic. There were thickly wooded hills, limestone rock outcroppings, numerous springs and rich meadows. Game was abundant. The sons built a rude cabin near a spring at the top of a beautiful hill with unusually high precipitous rocks at the top. This cabin and surrounding lands became the homestead of Richard and Jane Hodgson.

The parents and remaining children left England September 6, 1845, coming to this country on the sailing ship "Hotinger." The family provided and cooked its own food. With such poor facilities on shipboard, one wonders how they managed to survive such an ordeal. Benjamin, the youngest son, was a babe in arms. The Hodgsons arrived in Pleasant Valley, October 30, 1845. We can scarcely imagine the joy there must have been when the family was reunited!

Richard Hodgson's naturalization papers show that he became a citizen of the United States on April 9, 1852. He was always deeply interested in the public schools and civic matters.

"He was strongly in favor of the American idea." There is much to like about that phrase. Editor.

Volunteers Galore

It is common knowledge that all ICBS Directors volunteer for any sort of work which needs doing at the museum or for community outreach.

Other citizens work diligently several hours a week at times convenient to their schedule on interesting ICBS projects. Our present volunteers are:

**Joan Bennett
Alice Rosenberger
Joan Mish**

**Jeanette Hartman
Susan Coatney
Jane Anderson**

Check with Archivist Boyd Geer if you wish to be considered for volunteer openings ... 930-9084

Cobb High School Student Body Circa 1910-1914



Can you identify these eager scholars? Reviving old memories is the reward history buffs can claim as their own when rising to the identity challenge.

Acquisitions

Dorothy Anderson, Dodgeville, WI: photo of Star Cheese Factory, Highland.

G. Walstad, photo of Union Valley Cheese Factory.

Carl Lucas, Montfort, WI: Civil War records and article in ICBS Newsletter re Adolph Lukashek.

Carol Winninger, Muskegon, MI: 2 photos of former Schuelke Cheese factory in Ridgeway, WI.

Everett Olsen, Dodgeville, WI: ms, "Tax Impact of Converting Privately Owned Lands to a Public Recreational Development," 13 Yearbooks of Agriculture.

Elise Lindeman, Dodgeville, WI: books: "The History of Iowa County—1881" originals, Vol. I & II "Memoirs of Iowa County," 8 misc. booklets, pamphlets and a photo re Iowa County history.

Lois Holland, Mineral Point, WI: book: "I Remember as Told by Lois Holland" c. 2006 by Lois Holland.

Boyd Geer, Dodgeville, WI: book: "Cheese: The Making of a Wisconsin Tradition" by Jerry Apps.

Luther Johnson, Dodgeville, WI: scrapbook and 19 pages copied from another scrapbook.

Norman Rule, Mineral Point, WI: Wis. and Iowa County maps, John Deere photograph, 1949 invoice.

Sandra Arneson Buchanan, Durham, NC: thermometer Barneveld State Bank and notebook with player piano advertisement.

A Treasure for the Taking

by Phil Mayer

What a truly great thing we have in Iowa County! It is said that our own **Folklore Village** is far better known to people in other counties, states and yes, worldwide than it is here. Furthermore Folklore Village is perhaps the busiest place in Iowa County in that it has an exceptional range of thematic activities and at least one is staged virtually every week of the year. On top of that, it has growing on its own turf, one of the oldest existing Norwegian structures in the state. I use the words “growing” and “existing” not because you can walk around in it, but right now you can actually sort of walk on top of its parts.

The eponymous **Aslak Olsen Lie** (LEE) house was crafted near **Klevenville**, Dane County, in 1848 by a Norwegian immigrant. An all-around carpenter, cabinetmaker, and blacksmith, Lie had brought his skills with him from the old country.



Aslak Lie Family ... Very early scene

Back in the spring of 2002, two gentlemen from rural Mt. Horeb, **Bob Monshein** and **Kevin Green**, contacted **Brian Bigler** and **Tim White** of the **Mt. Horeb Historical Society** and told them they had a rare edifice on their property - an

old Norwegian log house - and asked Brian and Tim if they knew of an organization that would be willing to restore it. Neither the Society nor Bob and Kevin were interested in the project because it would have been too expensive to tackle, but Brian and Tim said they would try to find an organization that would take it down, move it, store it, and rebuild it.

They then contacted **Old World Wisconsin** and the **Vesterheim Norwegian-American Museum** in Decorah, Iowa. Both organizations also declined to accept the house. They then called **Doug Miller**, headman and general impresario at Folklore Village, because they knew about the success Folklore Village had in moving the **Plum Grove Church** to the Village grounds. Doug was struck “by the piece of history” it

was and went to his Board of Directors. He said to the members “It’s us or the burn pile.” The Board readily got behind the whole project primarily because there was so much history about Aslak Lie, the house and Aslak Lie, the man. His Board said that at the very least the building should be razed and stored even if funds were not available to rebuild it.

A private contractor from Sullivan who had done work for Old World Wisconsin was hired and in early 2003 the project began, log by log, board by board. The contractor utilized a distinctive albeit cryptic marking system so the building could be put back together properly and exactly as it had been. Doug Miller and associates took over 1400 pictures of the entire project. Folklore Village also sought expertise from around the state including Norwegian structure people and the **State Historical Society**. The **Vesterheim** also provided information. A past curator of the **Vesterheim**, **Darrell Henning**, and a man who had worked with Darrell, **Brian Betteridge**, oversaw the dismantling.



Lie Cabin prior to dismantling

By the fall of 2003 the razing was complete and its remains had been hauled to a location about a quarter of a mile south of Folklore Village where they were interred

in the lower level of a large barn. Finally it rested in a protected yet rickety environment. The barn was in a serious state of decrepitude.

The house was already listed on the **National Register of Historic Buildings** and Folklore Village petitioned the **National Park Service** for continued inclusion. The Park Service said it would be removed from the Register because the structure would be dismantled and moved. Another reason given was that it would be clustered with other buildings of various ethnic backgrounds, a practice the Park Service also disliked. It said that Folklore Village could apply to have it re-registered once the relocation and restoration work was completed.

(Continued on page 6)

Treasure ... Aslak Lie House

(Continued from page 5)

Jim Draeger, an architectural historian and Chief of the Office of Historic Buildings for the Wisconsin Historical Society, subsequently wrote a lengthy letter to the National Park Service. He emphasized the unique history of the structure as being one of the earliest and perhaps the only **sval** Norwegian-American house extant in our state. The **sval** or **svalgang**, which had been torn down, was a very typical **exterior gallery** on Norwegian houses. The sval was the original entrance to the house itself. He also was very precise in stating in his petition that the house would only be moved about 20 miles and, at its new location, be screened from other structures of diverse history as have all the buildings at the Village. Again the Park Service said "no."

After it is reconstructed, another petition with emphasis on the shortness of the move and the screening of the site will be sent to the Park Service with the hopes that it might finally render its imprimatur.

In the spring of last year, a major fund drive for the rebuild and restoration of the Aslak Lie house was held and the pledges and checks began coming in. Since the drive started, the logs have been moved from the barn to the building site where they have been securely covered and where they will be cleaned. Some logs that are beyond function will be accurately reproduced.

With the jumble of logs and boards once more a house and with the history of Aslak Lie, accomplished furniture maker and artisan, supporter of new immigrants, writer for Norwegian language newspapers, husband and father, portrayed, the building will again be full of life. People will be able to walk a path of yesteryear viewing and interpreting a structure that has been thoroughly and professionally researched and displayed while they learn all about the life and times of its builder.

Iowa County will have yet another jewel of the past at its famed Folklore Village.

Arrange for an appointment at ICHS.

We can take your messages 24-7. We will reply as soon as possible. Leave your name, telephone number, mail address and/or email address for fast service. **Call: 608-935-7694 or email: ichistory@mhtc.net**

Potpourri Again

Page 1 is never roomy enough to discuss ICHS events. A case in point is the public meeting at Stonefield Apartments in Dodgeville on January 20, 2007.

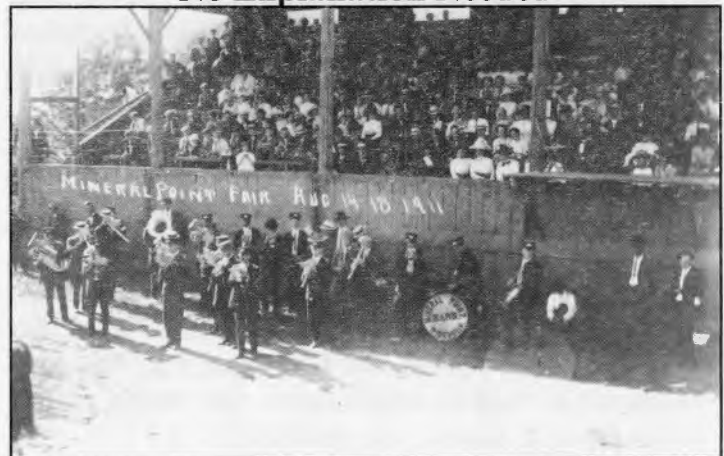


Jim Massey

Speaker **Jim Massey**, native to Iowa County and Editor of the farm weekly newspaper, "**The Country Today**" published in Eau Claire, Wisconsin, held the audience in the palm of his hand with a friendly trip through the fun, trials and unpredictables of his job as a country newspaper editor. For years a strict guideline

has been that every individual interviewed or discussed by staff in "The Country Today," is referred to as Mr. Jones, Mrs. Betty Jones, or Ms. Jones as the case may be despite the relevance of the individual to the subject of the story. Another policy which sets "The Country Today" apart is a strong emphasis on the individual successes the stock in trade of the paper. A very successful event, thanks to Jim Massey or Mr. Massey.

No Explanation Needed



A wonder to behold. A moment frozen in time The 1911 Mineral Point fair. Probably this was a post card. Post cards were very popular after 1900 and served as a subtle way to remind distant friends and family that you were interested in communicating and perhaps, at least in some families, a chance to propel sweet nothings to a beau. Formal studio portraits were often done post card size. *Memories anyone?*

**January 2007 Iowa County
Faces and Scenes
Quiz Answers**
From the top ... then clockwise

Moses McCure Strong, politician, Mineral Pt.

Florence Billington-Olson, 1930 reenactment

Hyde Smithy, now in restoration process

Dr. Jack Martell, cabin volunteer

Rebeckah Lamb, early Iowa County resident

Grandview, Hollandale, Engelbert Folk Art

Iowa County courthouse bell, Dodgeville

Lois Holland, Hollandale, 100 years of age,

Our oldest active member ... Congratulations

*The flag is the 30 star Wisconsin flag
honoring Wisconsin statehood in 1848*

The winner is:

Phil Mayer of Wisconsin and South Carolina.

Phil didn't have a perfect score but we threw caution to the winds and tapped staffer Mayer for recognition for his diligence. His award will be prepared for summer presentation at the Ice Cream Social in July.

Gentility is what is left over from rich ancestors
after the money is gone.

Newspaper Microfilm at ICHS

Arena Wis. Star, 1874-1876 and 1877-1886, becomes

Dodgeville Star in 1883-1886, becomes

Rural Eye, 1887-1887

The Eye and Star 1893-1895 becomes

The New Star, 1895-1896

Rural Eye of Arena, 1887-1888 and 1888-1889 becomes

The Eye and Star, 1890-1893

Index to Wisconsin Miscellaneous Newspapers

New Star, 1896-1897

New Star, 1898-1900

Dodgeville Chronicle, 1862 through June, 2006

Barneveld Banner, some issues missing

The Hollandale Review, some issues missing

*Think about it. The brick wall in your family research
may tumble if you search ICHS microfilm.*

Concord Hymn

Ralph Waldo Emerson

*By the rude bridge that arched the flood,
Their flag to April's breeze unfurled,
Here once the embattled farmers stood,
And fired the shot heard round the world.*

★★★★★★★★★★★★★
*This year it is hoped that this poem to
the embattled farmers at Lexington and Con-
cord is in your mailbox well before the anni-
versary of the opening battle for American
freedom ... 19 April 1775. Editor.*

Membership Application

Iowa County Historical Society

MAIL TO: MARIE SERSCH

106 E. Pine St., Dodgeville, WI 53533

Individual-annual \$10.00 5 year \$40.00

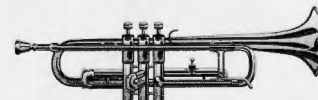
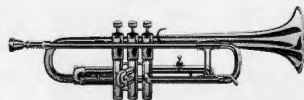
Couples-annual \$15.00 5 year \$60.00

Historian-annual \$25.00

Master Historian-annual \$50.00

Membership dues and categories

Membership year is July 1st—June 30th



Name _____ Street _____ P. O. Box _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Membership Period _____ Amount enclosed _____

*I am interested in making a tax deductible gift to the
Iowa County Historical Society. Please contact me at the above address.*

Signed _____

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Iowa County Historical Society

1301 N. Bequette St.

P. O. Box 44

Dodgeville, WI 53533-0044

MEMBERSHIPS**MAIL TO: MARIE SERSCH**

106 E. Pine St., Dodgeville, WI 53533

Individual-annual \$10.00 5 year \$40.00

Couples-annual \$15.00 5 year \$60.00

Historian, annual \$25.00

Master Historian, annual \$50.00

Membership year is July 1st-June 30th

ICHS SERVICES -GENEALOGY-HISTORIC RESEARCH

Archives for Iowa County: history-cemeteries-obituaries

photographs-newspaper microfilm-artifacts

Open May-Sept.: 10-noon and 1-4 weekdays

Winter Hours 1-4 weekdaysOr by appointment

Curator Dorothy Anderson

Phone 608-935-7694

Email: ichistory@mhtc.net

Web site: iowacountyhistoricalsociety.org

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ORGANIZATION
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Calendar of Events**Auction Reminder****April 14 Ley Pavilion.****Harris Park ... Dodgeville****10 am to completion****Raffle Tickets Available From:***Jack or Marian Reynolds**Farmers Savings Bank - All Branches**Peoples Bank - Barneveld**Royal Bank - Cobb & Avoca**Anchor Bank - Highland State Bank**Dodgeville C of C - M & I Bank Dodgeville**Museum - Any Director***4H Lunch on Grounds****Ice Cream Social****July 13****At the museum****4:30—7:30****Music-Food-Friends**

Aslak Lie House—1848