

# Iowa County History

Brought to you by the Iowa County Historical Society

Volume XXXII

No. 4

October 2007

## Potpourri

### Annual Meeting

**Bill Singer**, retired Iowa County businessman with a family background in mining, will speak at **7 p.m. October 18, 2007 at Stonefield Apartments in Dodgeville**. His subject: **Mining in Iowa County**. The early settlers rushed in during the 1820s with the prospect of riches from the lead laden hills of southwest Wisconsin dancing before their eyes. Did they achieve their dreams?



**Bill Singer**  
"Mining in Iowa County"

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

### In This Issue

**A Dodgeville Boy's Perspective on the Louis Schmeling Fight by Don Fieldhouse**  
Page 2

**1864 School Board Does Draft Tally**  
Page 3

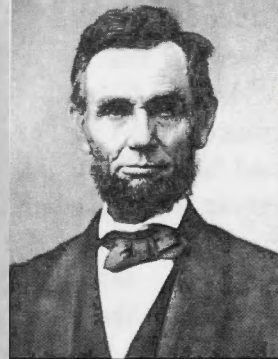
### Floyd School

*"Steady as she goes" is the word for ICHS progress in acquiring, moving and siting the old Floyd School. The Curt and Donna Peterson Family, donors, are more than helpful as the Society explores options for a successful move and restoration effort. Students who learned their lessons in the sturdy old building are requested to come forward with their stories. Thanks.*

### Al Pape's Restoration Class at Dodge Cabin

Another class taught by primitive building expert **Al Pape** toured the Dodge Cabin last June. Driving over from Mineral Point, they were guided by ICHS Archivist **Boyd Geer** and were impressed by the restoration.

The **Villages of Iowa County** and the **Hyde Chapel Quilt** stories in the July Newsletter brought much reader commentary. Now we are aching to learn who operated that **horsepower threshing rig** at Ruggles farm. See page 4 of July 2007 Newsletter.



### Abraham Lincoln

**"The Silent Artillery of Time"**

**Why We Care**  
Page 4

### Wyoming Valley

### A Century Old Tragedy

Contributed by **Leon Nelson**  
Pages 5-6

**ICHS has books, family histories, newspaper microfilm, and ... hardworking volunteers. Join us.**

## Joe Louis - Max Schmeling Fight From a Dodgeville Boy's Perspective

by Don Fieldhouse

There was a tense, expectant feeling on June 22, 1938 that spread through Dodgeville, across the United States and throughout much of the world. Joe Louis was scheduled to meet Max Schmeling at the Yankee Stadium in New York City to determine the new heavyweight boxing champion of the world. Joe Louis now represented the United States even though he was African-American as he had defeated James J. Braddock on June 22, 1937. Louis was then officially heavy weight champion, but he insisted he not be called champ until he had avenged his loss to Max Schmeling back in 1936.

Feelings were running high in 1938 as the German Army was moving across Europe and Schmeling was considered to represent the Nazi party. President Roosevelt had even told Louis, "Joe, we need muscle

like you to beat the Germans."

The fight lasted 124 seconds as announced from Yankee Stadium, New York City: "A right to the body, a left hook to the jaw, and Schmeling is down." I was excited. My Dad, brother and I had listened to the fight on our Atwater-Kent radio. I wanted to go talk to someone about it so I headed for the Centennial Park (Dodgeville) where kids hung out in the summer evenings. The park was right next door to my home at the "Fieldhouse Fruit Farm" and I considered the



Joe Louis

park to be my play ground.

On this particular evening there was a large bus parked next to the bandstand as a "black" baseball team was scheduled to play the Dodgeville team the following day. I felt a little uneasy about walking past this group as I was not comfortable with people of different ethnic backgrounds, but they were parked next

to the gate which I used to get into the park so I just quietly proceeded.

As I walked (snuck) past these loud, athletic men, I heard them arguing and betting on the outcome of the Louis-Schmeling fight as if it had not yet taken place. They were obviously confused about the time as New York was one hour later than Dodgeville time. I thought about how I could gently tell them that the fight was over and Joe Louis had won, but I thought about the reaction this would cause as some had bet on Louis to win and others for him to lose.

I made a quick decision not to tell them. Keeping

a low profile, I walked on through the park and circled around so I could go back home by a different route. They obviously found out the truth when they turned on their radio, but I was no where near them. I don't remember if I went to the baseball game the following day or not, but this incident has remained clear to me for the past 69 years.

*As you will note, Don Fieldhouse is an Iowa County native. He retired as a professor at*



Don Fieldhouse

*the University of Delaware and resides with his wife Dona Danhouser in a wooded area near Elkton, Maryland. This little story from Don's childhood in Dodgeville reminds us that racial attitudes have improved substantially since 1938. Thanks to Don for bringing this to our attention. Editor.*

**Do You Know Something ICHS  
Should Know?**

**Write, Call or Email Us.**

**See page 8.**

## Civil War Draft Dumped on Local School Board

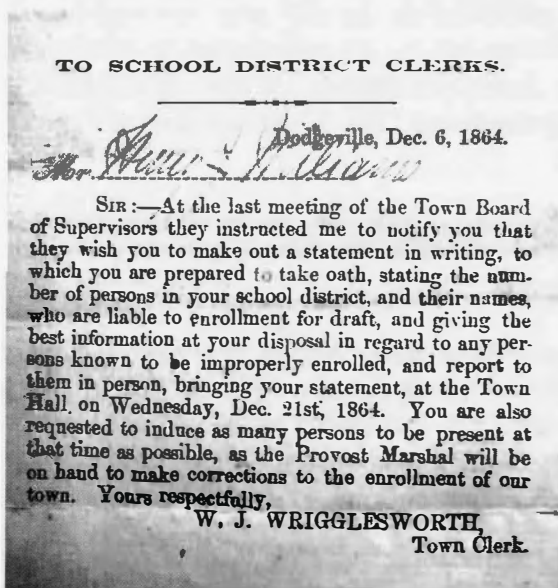
by Neil Giffey

In 2004 **Shelly and Dick Chambers** of Des Moines, Iowa donated some interesting historic material to the ICHS which showed up a few complications of local government which we are prone to believe did not exist in those oh-so-simple times. Some of this interesting trove from the past is herein presented. The Civil War was well supported in Wisconsin and especially in Iowa County with over 900 men serving for the Union. However, as casualty lists grew longer, the draft was instituted to provide a prod to encourage enlistments. To a degree it worked. As substitute fees grew larger (\$300 for example), many young farmers and businessmen paid cash to hire a local substitute, perhaps someone who was down on his luck or with the optimism of youth, expected to dodge the bullets which would be headed his way.

As you will note below, the Dodgeville Town Clerk was **W. J. Wrigglesworth** who also was editor and part owner of the **Dodgeville Chronicle**. It is unclear if this gentleman is the Walter J. Wrigglesworth who served for a time in the Civil War. Since we have long wished to know more about the Wrigglesworth Family, our readers are challenged to locate more information and photographs of this settler era family. All we have at ICHS is an image of **Ernest Wrigglesworth**, a nephew of W. J. and a printer's devil.

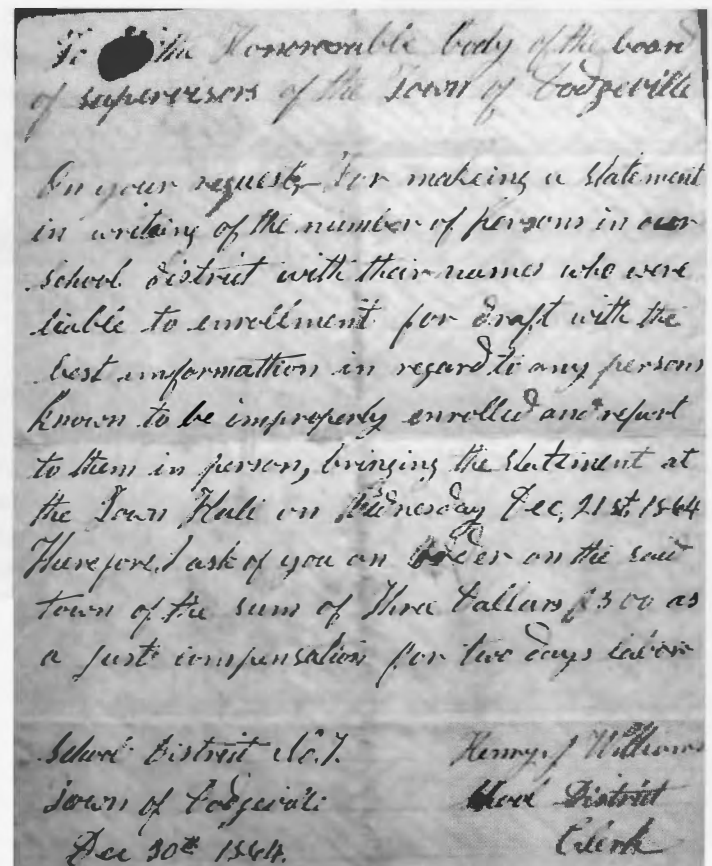
At least four different citizens owned all or part of the predecessors to the Chronicle in the period from 1858 to 1860 when W. J. Wrigglesworth took over. After he sold to A. S. Hearn in 1870, he published the Republican in Darlington, then moved back to Ohio and finally to Colorado. Busy people our early settlers.

The local school board was commanded on December 6, 1864 by the Town Clerk in the person of W. J. Wrigglesworth to provide a list of draft eligible men from their district. Evidently they complied by the deadline and then ... **Mr. Henry J. Williams**, District Clerk, presented a bill to the Town Board for two days labor totaling \$3.00. He likely earned every cent of that sum. We believe this was the same Henry Williams who helped to organize the Welsh Congregational Church in 1841 and evidently was a resident of Dodgeville Township. We wonder if he drive a horse and buggy to church and town meetings in 1841 horses were scarce and expensive but it is safe to assume that Henry J. Williams owned a horse and buggy before December 21, 1864 when he did his civic duty at the Town Hall. Please read below to know how the wheels of government turned in 1864.



### Holman-Climax Cornish Choir

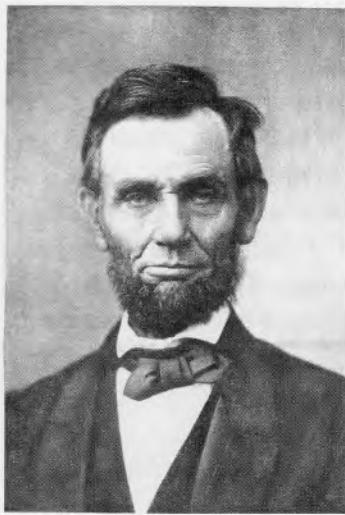
Anxious to hear the sound of Cornish voices raised in song, the Editor and his wife spent a thrilling two hours at the Mineral Point Opera House the night of July 31. If they fly in again, you must hear them.



## Lincoln ... The Silent Artillery of Time

by Neil Giffey

A favorite quote from Abraham Lincoln is from an address the 28 year old country boy gave before the Springfield, Illinois Young Men's Lyceum on January 27, 1838. His subject for the evening was "The Perpetuation of Our Political Institutions." As explained later by his law partner **William Herndon** "*The speech was brought out by the burning in St. Louis a few weeks before, by a mob, of a Negro. Lincoln took this incident as a sort of text for his remarks.*"



Abraham Lincoln—1864

He dwelt at length on the great good fortune that Americans lived under a system of government which supported and even expanded the concept of civil and religious liberty. In his clear but poetic manner, he reminded his audience that the crimes currently common in the growing country were committed in spite of the Constitution which was the fount of American good fortune for those past fifty years. To take the law in their own hands and to do harm to their

fellow citizens, for no better reason than the color of their skin or their religious beliefs, or to prejudice probable malefactors without a trial was not the sort of behavior enshrined in the Constitution. The mob in St. Louis demonstrated that their knowledge of the foundation pillars of the American Nation was a thin, weak knowledge. Lincoln was long aware that a "demagogic genius" might yet arrive and "enchant the populace" to do harm to the logic of our democratic institutions. Referring to the American Revolution some sixty-three years before, Lincoln stated that the scenes of that revolution are now or will grow ever more dim with the lapse of time. Then ... reminding his audience that our history is a fortress which the foreign foe could never overcome yet ... "the silent artillery of time" has done so from within, is evidenced by the actions of the thoughtless, and that we must stand fast to pass on the memory of our great beginnings.

*The ideas expressed in the lengthy text of young Lincoln's oration have been debated by historians for years. To zero in on one idea from among those presented in the full text, our readers are reminded that we are all called upon to renew and pass on the American Memory to our descendants and to thereby confound "The Silent Artillery of Time."*  
Editor.



## Under the Wire

*This message was received several years ago from frequent contributor, **Leon Nelson**, at a time when doubt and some controversy swirled about over the future of the "Old Middle School" in Dodgeville. Now it is history and we are happy to report that the historic sculptures Leon mentions have been saved and installed as works of landscape art at the Iowa County Courthouse and the Dodgeville Elementary School. A few remain in storage and will surely be given similar good usage. Thanks are due to many people, especially to **Anne Bachner**.*

In reading about the school sculptures that are being saved it gave me a funny feeling. It is hard to think that that building is so old that it has to be destroyed. I was about ten years old when it was being built, and I remember the deep trenches that were lined with plywood and fastened with twisted wire to keep the walls at uniform thickness, and waiting for the cement trucks to come and fill them. We would crawl down between the sheets of plywood and walk on the twisted wire in the trenches. You can not imagine what a great adventure that became for us to meander all over in the concrete forming of the building, like being in a clean tunnel. Maybe that is why they have to tear it down, we weakened it! Anyway, some years ago I wrote down about various adventures in the old grade school building that sat east of the "new" school. I have been thinking of sending you a copy of it. That building was built in the 1880s I think, and the steps were about worn out with deep troughs where many scholars feet had trod. Let me know if you want any more copy. **Leon**.

**Wyoming Valley—A Century Old Tragedy**  
*From the Autobiography of Charles Richardson (1874-1962)*  
*With Additional Notes from "The Valley of The God-Almighty Joneses"*  
*Commentary by Leon Nelson*

"Uncle George Smith operated the first steam-powered threshing machine and automatic feeder, straw blower and grain bagger in our neighborhood. Poor fellow, I was always afraid of him, but at the same time admired him for his rugged honesty and forthrightness. We were trying to shape up the roads one spring. I was set to do the job of riding the end of the plow tongue behind a four horse team, and in a fearful rocky section of the road, just above my field, and I suppose I must have been complaining about the job. At any rate, Uncle said that when it came time for him to die he wanted to die with his boots on. He had his wish.

"In crossing a poor excuse of a log bridge near **Herb Schoenmann's** old farm, he had been advised that it was not safe but went ahead anyhow, and the outfit jackknifed. The rear engine end and front fire-box end dropped into the ditch, breaking the steam gauge, and the escaping steam and water killed them while pinned helplessly between the two parts of the machinery. **Uncle James Lloyd Jones** came rushing up, climbed on the drive belt wheel, slipped and fell, breaking his arm, and died shortly. I understand that four or five members of the Jones family had always signed each other's papers in any business venture, and when he died the whole valley went into bankruptcy. It is just too bad. The whole valley has gone from bad to worse. Only three sets of buildings remain of what was once one of the best communities in Wisconsin, with its Hillside Home School and all that went with it."

**Notes by Leon Nelson:** *Many will remember Charles Richardson (1874-1962) and his daughter, Irene Johns (1920-1994), who wrote for the Chronicle and who had many articles published in the Up-land Reader.*

*In regard to the Wyoming Valley accident referenced above, Charles states that James Lloyd-Jones suffered a broken arm and James' niece, Maginel, claims he had a broken leg, which makes it more plausible that he would be unable to extricate himself from the wreck if his leg were entangled in the spokes before it broke. Also, his niece, Maginel, was at Uncle*

*James' home with her mother for the three days preceding his death and would be apt to remember more accurately the injuries incurred by her uncle. To understand Uncle George Smith's connection to Charles Richardson, the following information will enlighten you: In 1871 George W. Smith (1847-1907) married Sara Louise Richardson (1854-1894), Charlie's aunt.*

**Insight into the Tragedy**  
**From a Different Perspective**



**Aldebaran**

**Notes by Leon Nelson:** Uncle James Lloyd-Jones (Maginel and Frank L. Wright's uncle) had a dream and James tried to corner the market on available farms for sale in

and near their area of Wyoming Valley. He had his brothers and sisters put their signatures on his purchases of the farms guaranteeing his payments and now in 1907 there was a downturn in the economy.

Excerpts from the book, "*The Valley of The God-Almighty Joneses.*" Reminiscences of **Frank Lloyd Wright's** sister, **Maginel Wright Barney**, pages 110-111. (*Permission granted by the copyright as long as the excerpt is not more than 500 words.*)

"Finally, several years into the new century, he (James Lloyd-Jones) was sick with worry, and desperate. The mortgage papers, the exigence of his creditors, hounded him bitterly, and his thoughts and sleep were troubled by remorse and guilt. All his family were threatened by disaster just as he was, and because of him. He had dragged the Valley into this mess by himself, and it looked as if he would be its destruction. How would it end?

"It ended for him in a summer twilight after a day, like all his days, of unremitting labor. They had

*(Continued on page 6)*

*(Continued from page 5)*

been threshing oats, he and the others, and he had gone home tired and hot. The threshing machine, the water tank, and the hayracks were proceeding to another of his farms to be set up for the next day's work.

"The procession, led by the threshing machine and its tender, approached a small bridge over a stream. As the heavy engine crossed, the bridge gave way. There were shouts and a sickening crash. The engine and tender fell to the dry stream bed, spraying steam and hot water. The two drivers were scalded to death.

"James raced to the scene of the accident. He climbed onto the engine wheel leaning far over, trying vainly to reach and rescue the victims; shock and haste made him clumsy, his foot slipped and he fell, breaking his leg which had caught in the spokes of the wheel. They lifted him into his buggy, but soon he lapsed into a coma from which he never wakened.

"Mother rushed up from Oak Park, where we were living then. All the brothers and sisters assembled, praying and hoping against hope. Uncle James had strength and a tenacious hold on life, even though he was unconscious. But at the end of three days he died. It would take more than a broken leg to kill a man like Uncle James. Despair, I think, was the executioner."

*Notes by Leon Nelson. One would assume that after slipping, falling and lying against the hot machine for even a short time waiting for help to arrive to extricate him from disaster, that great internal injury caused James Lloyd-Jones to be in a coma for three days before his death. What a disaster for the area. It was like the old story "for the lack of a nail, the shoe was lost, for the lack of the shoe the horse was lost, for the lack of the man, the battle was lost, for the lack of the battle, the kingdom was lost," with the weak bridge being the "nail." And so it went with the Jones brothers and sisters who lost much of their land and possessions, the Jones sisters had to close Hillside Home School, and the University of Wisconsin lost a Regent.*

*In the absence of photographs of the principals in this tragedy, we have used a photo of Aldebaran, the home built by James Lloyd Jones and later acquired by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation. Photos relating to the people of the Wyoming Valley are welcomed by the Iowa County Historical Society. Editor.*

## Thanks and Thanks Again From The Iowa County Historical Society

I tread on thin ice this day ... to remember and to thank the numerous citizens who worked and displayed at the Ice Cream Social on July 12 is to tax my memory. For the **Iowa County Genealogical Society**, kudos to: **Peggy Perry, Mark Perry and Helene Bethke**. To **Elaine Stonestreet** who churned butter with some assistance from **Phil Mayer, John Hess, Boyd Geer**, and others. To **Alice Mueller and June Nagel** who spent hours determinedly quilting. To **Tony Ley** who displayed his collection of historic telephone artifacts to great interest, thanks. To 4-H leader **Mary Dunn** and the **4-H Clubbers** who were most helpful. To the **crew** who raised the tents. To the **Citizens of Iowa County** who showed up, ate, visited and had fun and to those I may have missed ... thanks.

---

## Another Jack and Bud Story

The Mad Bull of Norwegian Hollow

Recalled by Jane Davies

They were coon hunting in **Norwegian Hollow** north of Dodgeville when **Louie Otter's** mean old bull started chasing them. Jack said later "I didn't know that big ole Bud could run that fast ... he went by me like I was standing still." I said, "Well he didn't have to outrun the bull. All he had to do was outrun you."

*The participants in this delightful, in retrospect, little event, circa 1960s, were the late **Jack Harrison** and his coon hunting friend, **Merle "Bud" Heibel**. The comment to Jack Harrison was by **Jane Lane Harrison Davies**, a long time recorder of Iowa County life. Editor.*



Threshing near Arena Circa 1950  
So near and yet so far

**My Dream**

The night of September 21, 2005  
by Neil Giffey

I dreamt I was in Independence Hall, Philadelphia standing in a large room, looking into two smaller rooms and beyond them a huge room. The walls, ceilings and floors were entirely of wood, moderately dark and absolutely devoid of furniture. No human presence, no decoration of any kind, the impact on the observer was that of joyous emotion ... that mere humans, with all their built in faults, had here crafted a song for the ages, The Declaration of Independence, Philadelphia, 1776. Those humans traded ideas, engaged in sometimes bitter debate, finally all gave in to each other, with a few exceptions, of course. They were politicians but they rose above the rancorous and selfish posturing of many of their kind to show a dangerous leadership into unexplored territory such as human freedom, a little at a time. First to vote, then to be taxed by consent of the governed, to agonize over slavery until it would cost a million lives. Well ... It was only a dream and we are still working on it.

**Farmers Appreciation Day**

July 8, 2007 was the annual parade culminating with the myriad events at Harris Park. Our thanks to **Ron Arndt** for furnishing a tractor to pull the ICHS float and to **Tom Wilson** and others for the wagon and the planning.

**Mining in Iowa County  
with Bill Singer**

Thursday, October 18,  
at 7 p.m.

Stonefield Apartments

**Acquisitions**

**Virginia Cayler**, Dodgeville, WI: microscope formerly owned by Dr. D. M. Hamilton, acquired prior to 1905.  
**Jane Lane Harrison Davies**: "Minerva's Memoirs" biographical tribute to her mother, Minerva Reese.

**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 December 2006  
Barneveld Banner, some issues missing  
The Hollandale Review, some issues missing

*Break your brick wall with ICHS microfilm.*

*Make an appointment ...  
608-935-7694 or  
ichistory@mhtc.net*

**Membership Application**

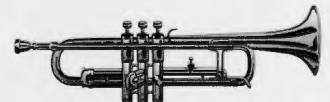
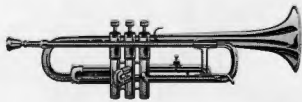
Iowa County Historical Society  
MAIL TO: MARIE SERSCH  
106 E. Pine St., Dodgeville, WI 53533

*Still the same  
good deal*

*Still the same  
good deal*

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 \_\_\_\_\_*

Volume XXXII No. 4 October 2007

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

The Society has archives for Iowa County: history-cemeteries-obituaries-photographs-newspaper microfilm-artifacts

Winter hours 1-4 weekdays

Or by appointment

*Curator Dorothy Anderson*

Phone us 24/7: 608-935-7694.

Email [ichistory@mhtc.net](mailto:ichistory@mhtc.net)

Web site: [iowacountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://iowacountyhistoricalsociety.org)

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION  
U. S. POSTAGE PAID  
DODGEVILLE, WI  
PERMIT NO. 86

Address Service Requested

Calendar of Events

Annual Meeting

7 p.m. October 18, 2007

At Stonefield Apartments

Dodgeville

“Mining in Iowa County”

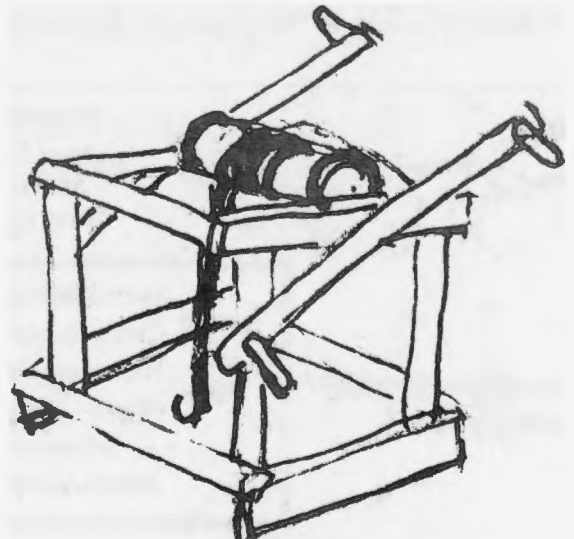


With William “Bill” Singer

*Elect a slate of directors*

*Enjoy a light lunch*

*Bring your lead mining stories to  
Bill Singer at  
Stonefield Apartments  
7 p.m. Thursday  
October 18, 2007*



*Primitive Mine Hoist  
Drawn by Lois Holland  
For “Mining in Iowa County”  
by Stan Holland  
Available from ICHS*