

# Iowa County History

*Brought to you by the Iowa County Historical Society*

Volume XXXVI

No.1

January 2011

## Potpourri

## ICHS Directors

### Public Meeting

1 PM - Saturday, January 22, 2011

In the Community Room of the  
"New" Iowa County Administration Building  
Dodgeville



**West Merrimac Street entrance  
on south side of Bldg.**

**Get the low down on Cooperage**

**... Its all about barrels**

**The show starts at 1 PM**

**Bring a friend, snacks after**

Alice Griffiths, Pres.	935-0574
Boyd Geer, VP	930-9084
Eileen Arndt, Sec.	935-2623
Marie Sersch, Treas.	935-5752
John Hess	588-7082
Don McGuire	929-7494
George Wallenkamp	929-7676
Margaret Peat	935-5532
Neil Giffey, Editor	935-5557

[giffey@mhtc.net](mailto:giffey@mhtc.net)

### In This Issue

Thomas Carkeek has created a small flow of incoming data from our members. So far **Janette Hartman**, **John Metcalf**, **Mary Knudson** and indefatigable veteran member **Melva Phillips** of Ridgeway seem to have done the most research about Carkeek's professional achievements. The builder of the Iowa County Courthouse and so many other fine buildings in the Lead Region warrants our study. Help the ICHS volunteers in their Carkeek quest. **Do you have a photo to share?**

**The Grove**

**Historic  
Dodge home**

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Those who know the value of history have worried and sweated over **American Historic Amnesia** as a cause for concern, as our nation matures. Many regret ignoring the generations who raised them and would have provided them with stories of their struggles with nature, representative government, food for the table, "getting ahead" (*many meanings*), and so forth, if only they had been asked. Then ... this same generation is surprised when they find they must actually live in the future which their lack of attention helped to create. Many Americans have a casual respect for history, but more must be convinced of the necessity to study history as the bed rock of the American future. Lets do it.



**Della at  
Floyd School  
Brings Back  
Memories**

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**The New Stratman  
Vehicle Company  
Page 6**



## The Grove

Home of Governor Henry Dodge near Dodgeville, Wisconsin

An excerpt from a paper titled "The Grove" as dictated by Mary Dodge Fox in April 1918  
to her granddaughter (name unknown)

"... I remember The Grove, home of my grandfather, **Henry Dodge**, very well. I spent much of my early youth there. Grandfather and his family moved into this house from the log house inside the stockade called **Fort Union**, where they lived during the trying days of the **Black Hawk War**. (1832)

**The Grove** was set in a splendid grove of trees, which gave it its name. The house itself was of wood painted white and there were dormer windows. Entering a wide hall, to the left was a door leading to Grandfather's and Grandmother's room. In this room was also Grandfather big desk. Toward the rear of the house the stairs rose from the left and turned on a landing toward the front of the house. Under the stairs there was a



Col. Dodge by Catlin

door leading to the dining room and another door opened to the cellar. To the right of the entrance door was the living room. This room ran the full length of the house from front to back and had a fireplace on the outside wall. In this room was the first piano to come 'upriver' to Wisconsin. My grandfather would place a piece of silver on the piano for the granddaughter who would practice the longest. We were taught music and dancing by a Polish Count who had come west for adventure. My Grandfather had attended a classical school in **Louisville, Kentucky**, where he was raised, and he had also read law. He was very strict about our education. He would write a sentence on paper and hand it to me with the command 'Granddaughter,

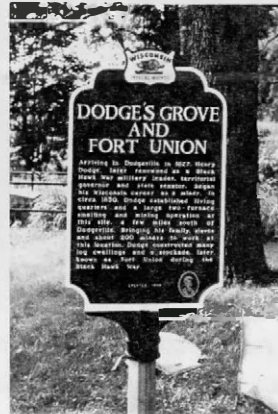
parse that sentence!' It has been said that his sons could not read or write until after they reached their majority, which is absurd. My Grandfather was a trustee of **Sainte Genevieve Academy** in the early 1800's where his sons were born and raised. My father **Henry Lafayette Dodge** was born in Sainte Genevieve in 1810 and his younger brother **Augustus Caesar Dodge** in 1812. They were seventeen and fifteen when Grandfather moved his family to Wisconsin, then **Michigan Territory**. It is reasonable to presume that by that age they would have acquired the rudiments of an education. When Grandfather was at home he read aloud from the classics in the evenings and on Sunday it was the Bible.

But to return to the house itself, I do not know exactly when **The Grove** was built, but I was born in 1839 and was in that home as a very young child. I remember the walls of the hall were covered with Indian trophies. There was an animal skin to which small bells had been attached and I would climb up the stairs to shake it by the tail. The choicest of these Indian trophies were after sent to the Capital at Madison.

The kitchen at **The Grove** was very large and the floor was of

stone. There was a brick oven and fireplace in one corner from which a vent sent heat into my Grandfather's bedroom. (*It was the only really warm room in the winter.*) Out back of the kitchen were what we called the "shanties" a series of wooden sheds for summer cooking and washing.

I can't remember the number of bedrooms upstairs but there must have been about five. I do re-



Dodge's Grove Site  
Marker



Henry Dodge



Christiana

(Continued on page 3)



member that all the women of the family congregated in a window at the top of the stairs to sew and gossip. With seven daughters there was always someone arriving for a visit or leaving. My recollection is that there was always a crowd in the house. My aunt **Elizabeth Piety Dodge** and her husband **Pascal Becquet (Bequette now)** lived at The Grove for some time and several of their children were born there. My favorite Aunts were **Nancy Kingsbury** (the eldest) and the one we called **Aunt Hayden, (Virginia Dodge Hayden)** born in Wisconsin in 1829 who was just ten years older than myself. (Grandmother was fifteen at the time she married Grandfather.)

Another place the women and children gathered in warm weather was the **Springhouse**. On hot days in summer it was delightful. Built of lattice with a stone floor, it was always cool. The milk was kept there and the fruit and vegetables stored in a root house.

Back of the main house was the **smokehouse** and still farther back were the **cabins of the negroes**. These were slaves which had been brought up from Ste. Genevieve and emancipated by Grandfather with each of



Wildcat

them given a small plot of ground and a mule. They all took the name of **Dodge**. **Joshua** and his wife **Phoebe** and another named **Toby** were house servants. Toby

was badly scarred, a wildcat had leaped on him while he was riding through the woods and had torn off most of his scalp. He used to try to make us children believe the "the Injuns had got him."

During my lifetime the only trouble with the Indians was the way they abused my Grandfather's hospitality by coming to his home and squatting in a circle and demanding food. The more he gave them the more they demanded. When my Grandfather was away, Grandmother gave them everything in the house to get rid of them. *(Most Indians of the time lived in poverty due to the loss of their farming and hunting grounds and they were justified to ask for food. Editor.)*

Unfortunately The Grove was destroyed by fire, but I believe that many of the furnishings were saved. **Uncle Augustus Dodge** had many of the things in **Burlington (Iowa)** and **Aunt Virginia Hayden** who lived in Milwaukee, at one time had my Grandfather's bed. Perhaps someday the house might be rebuilt; it could be used as a museum. The Iowa Historical Society might be willing to put in some of the interesting things, mementoes of my Grandfather and Grandmother, that were given by Uncle Augustus Dodge. Uncle Augustus did give Grandfather's sword to the **State of Wisconsin**. This was the sword presented to Henry Dodge by **Congress** in recognition of his successful expedition with his **Dragoons** to **Colorado** from **Fort Leavenworth** in 1835.

*Note: There were several more pages to these recollections of The Grove which have been mislaid. The above note was attached to the original manuscript. This remarkable recollection looks back about eighty years from 1918. Editor.*

## Potpourri and More; A Dream Recorded

*I am told that most everyone will confess to dreaming even if they cannot remember their dreams. The Editor is also sure that he has more dreams that he will remember on waking. Perhaps that's a good thing. Here's an unidentified man's dream of five years ago. It must have been the prelude to an election: 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. They traded ideas, engaged in sometimes bitter debate, finally most gave in to each other, with a few exceptions. They were politicians and they rose above the rancorous and selfish posturing of many of their kind to chart a dangerous path into unexplored territory such as human freedom, a little at a time. First to vote, secretly, then to be taxed by consent of the governed, to agonize over slavery until it would cost a million lives and on and on and on until arriving in the year 2011. Some dream.*



## Visit to Floyd School Stirs Memories in Dodgeville Native

by Barbara Weinbrenner

**Dells (Rowe) Guarraci** grew up in rural Iowa County, attended four country schools, transferred to **Dodgeville High School**, graduated from **Cobb High School**, moved to **Madison** as an adult, transferred to **Chicago** for her job and has now retired to **Redmond, Washington** with her husband, **Joe Guar-raci**. In all her travels, the country schools she attended have remained close to her heart and during a visit to Dodgeville this summer, Della stopped by **ICHS** to see the **Floyd School**. Even though it was not one of the schools that she attended, the Floyd School was within a mile or two of most of them and when she stepped inside the restored building all sorts of memories came alive.



Rock house in ruins

Della, the second oldest of five children, was born in 1941 to **Vernell** and **Elaine (Staver) Rowe**. At that time the family was milking a herd of dairy cows, and raising chickens, pigs and sheep on land where a new subdivision is presently located just north of **Lands End** at Dodgeville. **Vernell** and his brothers, **Elmer**, **Algie** and **Wesley**, all received a portion of land in that area from their father following their marriages. Della remembered living in a rock house with a slate roof and that when she was about three years old, the family relocated to a different farm.



Hunter Hollow Farm

"The snow would always drift and get very deep at the first farm and my mother wanted to be able to get to church easier in the wintertime," Della said. "She asked my father if they could move to a different location, so they bought a farm down on **Hunter Hollow Road**." It was there that Della attended first and

second grade in the **Dickinson School** with **Mary Limmex** as teacher.

"All of my country school teachers were very dedicated," said Della, "and I admired their ability to teach all eight grades in the school." At the Dickinson School, Della recalled, lining up for water with her classmates from the **Penberthy**, **Ruppert**, **Larson** and **Dickinson** families, using the same dipper, and also carrying her lunch to school in a pail.

"I had a thermos with me that contained soup or something to drink," she said. "if we needed something heated, the teacher had a Dutch oven with hot water in it and she would set the container in water until it was warmed up."

During her time at the Dickinson school, Della's father had an near-fatal heart attack at 37 years of age. People who responded to help the family thought Vernell was dead and loaded him up in the vehicle that would take him from the farm to the funeral home. However, during the trip, the two men heard what sounded like moaning coming from the back and, and upon a close check, they found that Vernell was still very much alive. "We were pretty relieved," Della said. "My mother had three young kids to take care of and fourth on the way. She didn't know what we would have done without Dad. Here we thought we had lost him, but it turned out that he lived to be 90 years old."



Standart Store

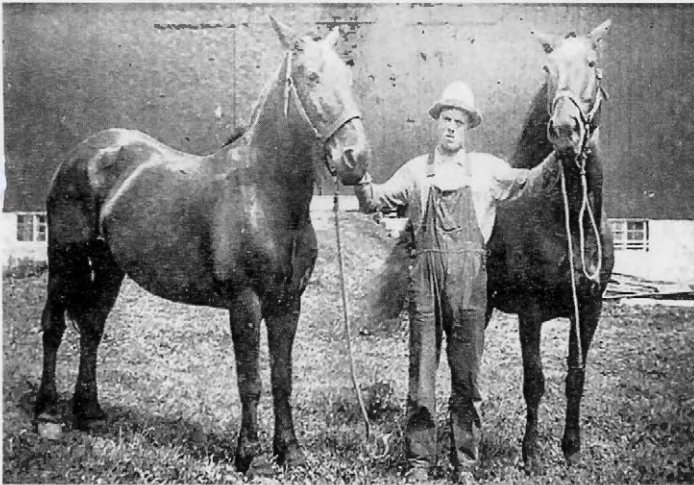
Della said that the family decided to sell their farm because, even when recovered, Vernell could no longer do the heavy labor that the farm required. When he and Elaine found a position running the **Standart store**. At the corner of Highway 130 and County M, the family moved into the living quarters above and behind the store. "It has been torn down now, but when we lived there it was a general store with things like bread, lunch meat, soft drinks and baking supplies," Della said. A **Mr. Smith** probably



owned it then. "I don't remember us kids going into the store very often, but I imagine we got ourselves into trouble every now and again, messing around with things we shouldn't have.

"Moving to the store also required a change in school location for the Rowe kids and when she completed third, fourth and fifth grad, it was at the **Spring Valley School**. She recalled that **Rose Dunbar** was the teacher and kids from the **Conway, Bennett, Jackson, Gorman** and **McCluskey** families were her schoolmates. "There were no discipline problems at all. Mrs. Dunbar had everything under control and was an excellent teacher. "We all had chores and I remember us getting water, cleaning the blackboard and running around to sweep up this reddish brown substance (*sweeping compound*) they use to put down on the floors to keep the dust down."

For sixth and seventh grade, Della attended the **Five Point School** on County "Q. "**Frank Trine** was



Vernell Rowe loved his horses

our teacher there and he was a good one." We went on lots of field trips to the forest and he taught us about the beavers and how they built their lodges."

She added that the **Spring Valley** and **Five Point** schools had indoor toilets but there was no plumbing, only pits which had to be cleaned out from time to time. "At least we didn't have to go out side in the winter," she stated.

Della completed eighth grade back in Dickinson School and then graduated from grammar school at the **Smith School**, which was taught by Mrs. Rice on Highway 130 "I remember when **Lillian Ellis** was the Superintendent and she came to visit school, we would get extra free time while the ladies talked. "We thought that was great."

She added that some of the schools had swings

or slices, but others didn't have any equipment at all. "We had to make our own fun," We played a lot of baseball when it was warmer out and had snowball fights." Della felt that the close-knit community of stu-



Della Rowe Guarraci

dents at the country schools allowed for all the kids to really get to know each other and she liked that the older kids would help the younger ones with reading and other subjects. "I think we learned more because we could also hear what the older kids were learning," she said.

Della moved to **Madison** after high school for a position as office manager at the **W. T. Grant** store on **Capitol Square** near **Mifflin Street**. She roomed at rooming houses on **Langdon** and **Gorham Streets**. Della's acceptance of the **W. T. Grant Chicago** job offer led to meeting her future husband. "**Chicago** was so much bigger than **Madison**, but when you're young, you adjust very easily," Della said. "Even though, you miss the closeness of people and knowing your neighbors and other church members.

Della and her husband lived in the **Chicago** area from, 1960 until 1998 raising three sons. When they looked for a location to retire to they chose **Redmond, Washington** because they had visited one of their sons there several times and loved it.



Della Rowe Guarraci

Even though they live many states away now, the Guarraci make it a point to visit family and friends in **Dodgeville** regularly and during their visit here this summer they stopped at the **Floyd School** on the **ICHS** grounds.

"When I stepped into the school," said Della, "I was just immediately transported back to my early school days. All of the desks and the stove—everything looks so nice."



The Editor hasn't checked "yet" but a really detailed history of the **New Stratman Vehicle Company** and the **Stratman Family in early Dodgeville**, might be in order. Although we see most any kind of art on calendars it seems a stretch, albeit a romantic stretch, to see Iowa County citizens in Mid-Ocean as per the Stratman calendar to the right. It seems that the power of advertising causes us all to dream big. We dream big at the **Iowa County Historical Society** too. We dream that our mission to archive the history of Iowa County, Wisconsin and get it out to the citizens of the area will proceed with the same commendable speed exemplified by the enormous strides taken by recent volunteers like **Eileen Arndt**, **Mary Knutson**, **Alice Griffiths**, **Janette Hartman**, **Melva Phillips**, **Marie Sersch**, **Don McGuire**, **George Wallenkamp**, **Boyd Geer**, **Margaret Peat**, **John Hess**, **Tom Wilson**, **Dick Conway**, **Shelly Bennett**, **Alice Rosenberger**, **Joan Bennett**, **Eileen Olson**, **Eudelma Olson**, **Dee Wunderlin**, **Chuck Peplinski**, **Ann Peterson**, **Le Roy Grunenwald**, **Jim Bennett**, **Vesna Dzamonja**, **Helen Radtke**, **Anna Whalen**, **Jo Ann Murphy**, **Melva Phillips**, **Jack & Marion Reynolds**, **Vickie Stangel**, **Terry Carroll**, and **Matt Sweeney**, Webmaster.

*Thank you one and all. — The ICHS Board.*

## GOOD BUGGIES AND WAGONS



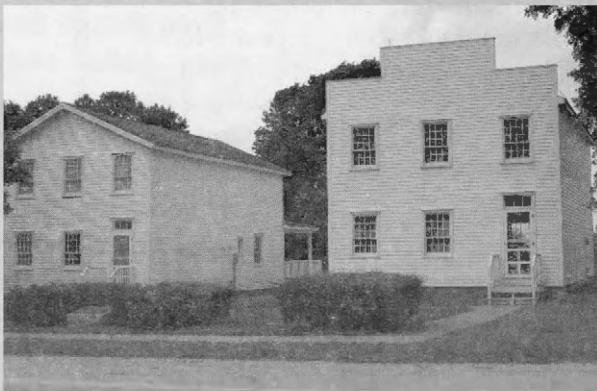
**NEW STRATMAN VEHICLE CO.**  
DODGEVILLE, WIS.

1910 JUNE 1910

SUN.	MON.	TUE.	WED.	THU.	FRI.	SAT.
N. Moon 7th	F. Quar. 1st		1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	F. Moon 22d	L. Quar. 29th

Do you have a colorful calendar? A window through which to view the passage of time in the world of Iowa County Wisconsin. Is there is a story in your calendar?

Most of the **Lead Region** of Southwest Wisconsin was covered by the vast **Tall Grass Prairie** of mid America. Remnants still exist, some in Iowa County and the acreage being preserved increases. Imagine hiking through six foot oceans of grass and stepping into a Yellow Jacket hive (*nest?*) and attempting to escape in that all enveloping sea of grass. Previously unknown acceleration and speed would propel the innocent intruder away from the imminent danger. This was surely an acceptable hazard when walking or riding in that great dry land ocean of the 19th century. Diligent Americans are restoring and preserving America's prairie heritage every day of every year.



First Territorial Capitol ... Belmont, Wisconsin

**Iowa County**, in **Wisconsin Territory**, according to the 1836 census, was the giant of the Territory with 5234 inhabitants. **Brown**, **Crawford**, and **Milwaukee** trailed. **Governor Dodge** then proclaimed the statewide apportionment of legislators by population density.



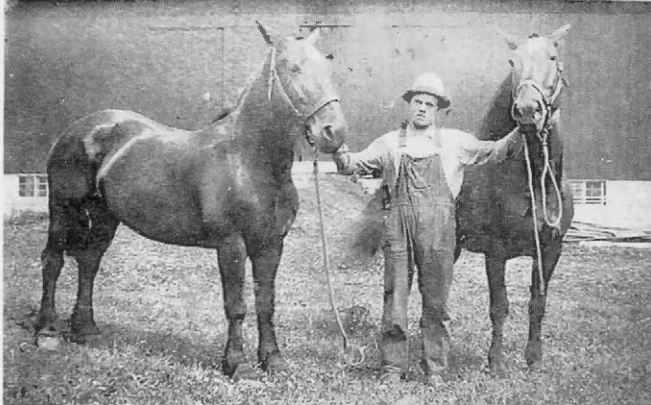
## Letters ... Emails

Society supporter **Tom Jeffris** of **Janesville** recently sent a note commenting that he enjoyed the bottles information in the October Newsletter and the Dodgeville Rangers story as Janesville and Rock County also had a Civil War Ranger contingent.

We received a heartfelt email from loyal member **Judy Moody** of the **Twin Cities** area. She is descended from **William Wigham**, Captain of the **Highland Company** in the **Civil War**, later **Iowa County Sheriff**, who later still led a **wagon train of Iowa County settlers** to the promised Land of the Minnesota Prairie. Judy wrote of her interest in the provenance of an old cobalt colored bottle discovered by her husbands grandfather. Her message was forwarded to our bottle expert **Michael Seeliger**, who promised a rapid reply.

**Julie Weiskircher** of **Dodgeville** writes to commend Society Staff for the energy, enthusiasm, and excellence which they put into their work. *Truly praise is our best reimbursement.*

Thank you,  
Editor.



Don't horse around, join ICHS

## Newspaper Microfilm at ICHS

Adamsville Advertiser April 17, 1891 only  
Arena Wis. Star, 1874-1876 and 1877-1886, becomes  
Dodgeville Star in 1883-1886,  
Dodgeville Chronicle, 1862 through June, 2010  
Barneveld Banner, some issues missing  
The Hollandale Review, some issues missing  
Rural Eye, 1887-1887  
Rural Eye of Arena, 1887-1888 and 1888-1889 becomes  
The Eye and Star, 1890-1893  
The Eye and Star 1893-1895 becomes  
New Star, 1895-1896  
New Star, 1896-1897  
New Star, 1898-1900  
Miners Free Press, Mineral Point, 1837-1843, some issues missing  
Miners Free Press, Wis. Tribune, Mineral Point  
Mineral Point Home Intelligencer 13 Sept. 1860 and 31 May, 1862  
The Gleaner, Arena, Nov 8-Dec. 6, 1894  
The Southwest Wisconsin, Linden, 1854-1907  
Index to Wisconsin Miscellaneous Newspapers

## Membership Application

Iowa County Historical Society

Mail to: Treasurer, Iowa County Historical Society

P.O. Box 44, Dodgeville, WI 53533-0044

## Membership dues and categories

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

Institutional Membership \$25.00

*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 XXXVI No. I January 2011

Iowa County Historical Society  
1301 N. Bequette St., P. O. Box 44  
Dodgeville, WI 53533-0044  
MEMBERSHIPS

MAIL TO: Treasurer, Iowa County Historical Society

P. O. Box 44, Dodgeville, WI 53533-0044

Family, includes spouse \$10.00

5 year membership \$40.00

Historian, annual dues \$25.00

Master Historian, annual dues \$50.00

Institutional dues \$25.00

Membership year is July 1-June 30

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## ICHS SERVICES-GENEALOGY-HISTORIC RESEARCH

The Society has archives for Iowa County: history-  
cemeteries-obituaries-newspaper microfilm-artifacts  
Archivist: Boyd Geer, Curator: Janette Hartman

Museum phone 608-935-7694.

Email: [ichistory@mhtc.net](mailto:ichistory@mhtc.net)Web site: [iowacountyhistoricalsociety.org](http://iowacountyhistoricalsociety.org)

Museum open year-round except for holidays.

Weekdays 1-4 pm

by appointment at other times.

*Are you ready for cooperage?*

*See you January 22 at the  
new County Administration Building*

## PUBLIC MEETING

1 PM - Saturday, January 22, 2011

Community Room

**"New" Iowa County Administration  
Building in Dodgeville**

West Merrimac St. entrance  
south side of building

*Cooperage show**"Barrels Galore"**By Gary Hess*

White Oak logs in waiting



Hess barrels at work

The 16th International Gathering of  
Cornish Cousins  
AUGUST 10-14, 2011  
Mineral Point, Wisconsin