



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

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*Spring 2019   V22N1*

**Blacksmith Shop**

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**Education**

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**Event Coordinator**

*Daryl Grier*

**Historic Sites**

*Quint Mueller*

**Library/Program/  
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*Marge Holzbog*

**Lillicrapp Welcome  
 Center**

*Aerona Smith*

**Long-Term Planning**

*Susan Sawdey  
 (acting chair)*

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*Warren Wiedmeyer*

**Mill House**

*Clara Birkel/  
 Cindy Schmechel*

**Mill Restoration**

*Harry Niemann*

**Pioneer Homestead**

*Susan Sawdey*

**Project Coordinator**

*Del Schmechel*

**Volunteer Coordinator**

*Sharon Lofy*

**Wolf Feed Mill – Richfield, Wisconsin – Jerry Wolf**

The initial part of the Wolf Feed Mill building was only a grain elevator. It was built by William Wolf in the late 1800s. An addition was added later for feed storage, and a feed mill was installed by Herman J. Wolf, which later became known as Wolf Bros. Feed.

Due to Richfield's farmland being developed, and for other reasons, the Mill was no longer needed. Sadly, after 120 years we have to take the building down.



**William Wolf  
 1846 – 1900**



**Wolf Feed Mill**



## Richfield's Claim to Tower Fame - Susan Brushafer

The year was 1942 and history was being made. World War II was being fought. Bogart and Bergman heated the big screen in 'Casablanca.' The Cardinals beat the Yankees in the World Series. 'Chattanooga Choo Choo,' recorded by Glenn Miller and his band, received the first RCA Victor gold record for selling 1.2 million copies. Milwaukee's broadcasting station WTMJ, a pioneer in FM radio, built the Richfield Tower. That last bit of history should pique your curiosity!

During the 1930s, broadcasting stations started experimenting with high fidelity radio, known to us as FM radio. Journal Communications, a Milwaukee-based newspaper publishing company, which started in 1882, had expanded into broadcasting. As early as 1939, the Journal Company applied for and received permission from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to erect an experimental FM transmitter. The station's transmitter, control rooms, studios, and workshop were located on the 22<sup>nd</sup> floor of the Wisconsin Tower, at 6<sup>th</sup> and Wisconsin Avenue in Milwaukee. On February 11, 1940, WTMJ put experimental FM station W9XAO on the air. It was said to be the first FM radio station west of the Allegheny Mountains, and was one of the first five FM stations in the country! The newness of FM radio, while intriguing to people, also meant that few living in Milwaukee actually owned FM 'radio sets.' Journal Communications helped solve that problem by purchasing 21 radio sets, and placing them around Milwaukee so that the public could listen.

Both AM and FM grew in popularity, along with television. Responding to this growth, Journal Communications in 1941 began constructing 'Radio City,' which included a 300-foot broadcasting tower at its new location at North Humboldt Blvd. and East Capitol Drive. (*Over the years, Journal Communications went through a series of name changes and owners, and is currently located at 333 W. State Street.*) The station was relicensed in April 1941 as a commercial FM station on 45.5 MHz, with the call sign W55M. It broadcast music, two news breaks, and was on air for 12 hours daily.



**Journal Communication 200 ft. Tower  
South of Richfield Elementary School**

So, where does Richfield's claim to tower fame fit into this FM scenario?

In 1941, Journal Communications built a 200-foot tower on Richfield Hill, a 450-foot elevation located just south of what is currently Richfield Elementary School. The tower complex included a two-floor brick building that housed living quarters for engineers/operators and was located 130 feet from the base of the tower. By 1948, W55M had become WTMJ-FM, and was the most powerful FM station in the United States thanks to the 50,000 watt transmitter in Richfield!

It reached listeners as far west as Columbia and Dane counties and extended into parts of northern Illinois

An article on WTMJ-FM, the World's First 'Super Power' FM Station, was published in the February 1949 issue of RCA's Broadcast News Magazine. It's worth noting this excerpt from that article in order to appreciate the Richfield Tower's local claim to fame.



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“If WTMJ-FM were located in Milwaukee proper, some forty to fifty percent of the area served would be over the waters of Lake Michigan proper. By locating the transmitter fifteen miles inland, a land area of 18,000 square miles is being served. The population served, according to the 1940 census, is an estimated 2,432,000 people.”

The entire RCA Broadcast News article, for those interested in details and pictures, can be found at <http://fmamradios.com/WTMJ-FM.html>

Unfortunately, in 1945 the FCC began hearings on a restructuring of the post-war radio bands. This was a setback for FM, and it would not recover from this restructuring for more than fifteen years. Post-war sales for new FM receivers were extremely slow, so on April 2, 1950, WTMJ-FM joined the growing list of dark FM stations. The Journal Company got back into the FM business in 1959.

History buffs, gain more information on the growth of FM radio by ‘tuning into’ an article written by John Schneider, the Radio Historian: [www.theradiohistorian.org/wtmjfm.htm](http://www.theradiohistorian.org/wtmjfm.htm)

## **President**

## **Del Schmechel**

Each year brings a mixture of challenges and opportunities. This year is no different. Our mission is to discover, collect, preserve and promote the history of the Village of Richfield. To this end, we interact with the community to discover and collect stories and artifacts. The stories are carefully indexed, sometimes published and always filed for the future. The artifacts are “accessioned” by documenting the donor, a description along with the history, use and condition. If you ever have the opportunity to inspect an item from our collection, there is a number on the item that can be used to retrieve its complete file.

Collections, as important as they are, need people to properly make use of them. We share our items with our “Traveling Trunks” and permeant displays at the Historical Park. Each of our four trunks has a different selection of artifacts. We take them to nursing and retirement homes and put on programs. It is very interactive, and we always encourage the audience to participate. It would be very difficult for many of these people to visit our park, so we take some of the Park to them.

Our wonderful staff of volunteers believe in our mission and put in countless hours to make it a reality. They don’t say “I wish I could” or “Maybe next time.” They just respond with “Let me know when and where, and I will be there.” With that being said, we could do a lot more with additional help. This brings me back to challenges and opportunities. I challenge you to think of the opportunities to help us with our mission. This newsletter has opportunities on each page. Pick any committee and contact its chair. You will find there are many ways to help as much as you would like. If outreach isn’t for you, we always have a need for park maintenance or help at one of our events. I was just like you only a couple years ago. Just give it a try.

## **Blacksmith Shop**

## **Kathy Lauenstein/Judy Gade**

Maple Syrup Family Day- Wow! Lots of visitors with a bounce in their step stopped in. Demonstrations were ongoing with five smiths showing off their skills. The north end of the building had a children’s workshop where they could test their skills. Lots of great future smiths came to visit us.

It is amazing to think that only a few years ago a blacksmith shop was only a dream, and now the Richfield Historical Society has an operational shop with several forges and support equipment. We also have had several individuals interested in working in the shop. We hope those interested will join us. (If any RHS member has blacksmith equipment they wish to donate, we have a place to properly display it.)



With spring in the air and the sweet smell of maple syrup, the smiths are forging new ideas for some great shows for you to learn and see. Step Back in Time events are new this year for the south end of the Park. The Blacksmith Shop will have demonstrations at the main entrance of the building; and at the north end of the building, there will be a children's workshop with activities scaled to their size. The "make it/take it" will be metal leaves and a great oak leaf to start with.

The interior construction of the Blacksmith Shop is nearing completion. Lining the walls with weathered lumber now makes the Shop appear similar to old original shops. The electrical distribution is complete, and we are now working on permanent lighting. With this being done, all the major construction will be completed in the Shop.

Additional blacksmith equipment is scheduled for delivery this spring. Gary has been working on making numerous hand tools needed for our operating shop. Antique blacksmith tooling is almost extinct these days. Blacksmiths must make their own tools in order to produce blacksmith items. We have been very fortunate to have many antique items donated to us.

Tools racks are being fabricated which will display the many different hand tools that will be used by blacksmiths in our shop. This spring all donated equipment is being inspected and cleaned with some reconditioning when needed.

**Thoughts on the art of blacksmithing** – Most people are familiar with the work of blacksmiths, but there were also individuals called whitesmiths. The whitesmith used files and hand tools to put the finishing touches on the items the blacksmith forged. Back in the early days, hammer marks were not acceptable in quality blacksmith work. So a whitesmith was employed to polish and remove these hammer marks. Today, most people want hammer marks left on the item to show that the item was indeed hand forged and not mass produced.

Another misconception is the difference between a blacksmith and a farrier. A farrier works with animals making shoes for the animal's hoofs. Before commercially produced horseshoes were available, the farrier had to make "shoes" from raw metal. Animals requiring hoof care were horses, oxen, mules and donkeys.

There was also a wheelwright who worked with hot steel as a profession. Keeping in mind that the animals pulled rolling stock, such as wagons and other wheeled vehicles, someone needed to produce and maintain these vehicles. The majority of the wagons were made of wood, but critical components such as the wheels, hubs, rings, fasteners and the running gear were all hand forged by a blacksmith and were generally maintained by a wheelwright.

During the time America was being developed, the above mentioned crafts were closely aligned and were typically housed together in one single shop. Most farmers and ranchers did their own basic blacksmithing and farrier work out of necessity. The major and complicated needs were done by professional blacksmiths. Many of the blacksmiths, farriers and wheelwrights were immigrants from Europe that came to America seeking a new life and brought their talents such as blacksmithing with them.

## **Collections**

**Jean Happel/Norb Berres**

We have several old coffee grinders in our collection, no two exactly alike. Recently we have a new (old) one to add, with a glass reservoir that happens to be full of coffee beans. As I sat at my table, sipping my "good to the last drop" coffee, I happened to be pondering that grinder. It occurred to me that most people likely know that the first cola drink came about in the early part of the twentieth century. Things like bottled



fruit juices were also first marketed in that period. But coffee, with a similar caffeine kick to the cola drinks, has been around much longer. Most people generally know it came to us from the Middle East somewhere, but the exact source and history is a little vague.

Wikipedia has kindly shed some light on the origin, claiming a humble goat herder in ninth century Ethiopia happened to notice that his goats became a bit more active after eating some berries off a wild plant growing near where his herd was grazing. I don't imagine the green berries were very palatable; but in his search to make use of the obvious kick the goats were getting, he or his kin must have experimented with roasting and brewing. From there, they must have cultivated the shrub as a crop, so the whole tribe could enjoy.

The enterprise through the years eventually spread to the Arabian Peninsula where, in Yemen, it was propagated and perfected somewhere around the 15<sup>th</sup> century. It was jealously guarded by boiling the berries before they were sold, so they could not be grown by others. From there, it was spread to Europe, primarily by smugglers and to the rest of the world.



**Coffee Grinder**

Seeds of an ancient relative of the coffee plant (named for the Kaffa area of Ethiopia,) which were discovered in some 45 million year old amber, also were the evolutionary source for sun flowers, peppers, potatoes, mint and some deadly poisons. There are two main species of coffee cultivated today, Arabica and Robusta. Three quarters of the world's coffee is Arabica, though Robusta has much more caffeine and is used mainly as a filler or for Italian espresso. Used grounds make good fertilizer, especially for acid loving plants like blueberries.

## **Education**

**Kathy Weberg**

Since January, the traveling trunk has "traveled," or will travel, to the Matterhaus at the Gables in Germantown, Menomonee Place in Menomonee Falls (two times,) Jackson Crossings in Jackson (three times,) New Perspective in West Bend (two times,) the Waterford in Hartford, the Waterford in West Bend, and the Cottages at Cedar Run part of Cedar Communities in West Bend.

Details are being worked on for the education days on May 15 and May 21. We are also hoping to get a representative into the middle school at Richfield Elementary School to talk about Richfield's involvement in the Civil War. It's a work in progress right now.

Featured this month from one of our traveling trunks is a shaving mug and brush. Prior to the convenient aerosol shaving cream available today for enhancing the shaving experience, men worked up a lather in the shaving mug with soap and then applied it to their face with the soft-bristled brush. The container pictured here still has remnants of soap (hard as a rock!) in the container. On the top ledge of the stove in the kitchen at the Mill House, George Mayer's shaving mug and brush are displayed.



**Shaving Mug and Brush**



**Events****Daryl Grier****Antique Show, Appraisal, Chili Lunch, Silent Auction – Pete Samson**

This year's Antique Show, Appraisal, Chili Lunch and Silent Auction was another success in spite of the terrible weather that was going on outside. It was really wonderful to see the number of people who faced the weather to attend. Many came just for the wonderful chili and delicious homemade desserts. The Chili Lunch included a bowl of chili, fixings, muffin, brownie and your choice of beverage for \$7.00. Hot Dogs, Chili Dogs and a variety of delicious homemade desserts were also available for purchase. We had five knowledgeable appraisers available to provide information and value regarding items that were brought in for appraisal. Our many dealers offered a large variety of Vintage, Collectibles, and Antique items for sale. (Vintage items are 50-99 years old, and Antique items are over 100 years old.)

Next year this event is scheduled for Sunday February 16, 2020. The same trustworthy appraisers will be available and eager to see what treasures you might bring in. These appraisers are knowledgeable with regard to coins and stamps, military items, Native American items, Civil War and WWII items, jewelry and general vintage or antique items. The cost for a single appraisal item is \$5.00, which includes free entry to the show. General show admission is \$2. The Silent Auction will again include some interesting vintage or antique items.

We hope to see you next year, Sunday, February 16, 2020 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Friess Lake School in Richfield.



Antique Show

**Maple Syrup Family Day – Pete Samsun**

We could not have asked for a better day for this year's Maple Syrup Family Day. The weather was perfect; we had lots of visitors to the Park; and we even had some media coverage.

The Sugar Shack, located in the south part of the Historical Park, offered tours and information on how our award winning maple syrup is collected and processed. (It takes 40 gallons of collected sap to make 1 gallon of syrup.) Maple syrup was available for sale. Hot dogs, beverages, treats, and our own Maple Sugar Cotton Candy were also available for purchase during the event. We sold 370 cones of Maple Syrup Cotton Candy and would have sold more, but we ran out! If you would still like to purchase some syrup, stop by the Sugar Shack most weekdays or contact me.



Directly across from the Sugar Shack is our fully operational Blacksmith Shop. Our visitors at Maple Syrup Family Day enjoyed seeing the working smiths. A little to the north you will find the Pioneer Village. At this year's event, the Pioneer Homestead rendered lard from pig fat in our large rendering cauldron. Our young visitors helped grind the fat for cooking down into lard. Inside the pioneer cabin, children listened to story time after helping pat out the biscuit dough that was being prepared. Meanwhile, near the barn, there was a flurry of activity for kids including shelling and processing corn to separating wheat from the chaff to stuffing the rope bed mattress with fresh straw. A fun days' work at the Pioneer Homestead.

In addition to the Sugar Shack and Blacksmith Shop and Pioneer Homestead, many visitors toured the Welcome Center General Store, the old Grist Mill, and the original homestead home located on the north side and central part of the Park. We had a record attendance throughout the Park. Everyone young and old left the Park smiling.

Save the date for the next Maple Syrup Family Day - March 28, 2020. You won't be disappointed.



Visitors at the Sugar Shack



Maple Syrup Cotton Candy

**Events Committee Chairman**

At the Events Committee, we discuss the next event; we also evaluate prior events to determine what needs to be changed to provide a good time for all. Our committee does not have a set meeting date as we meet when we need to work on specific issues, sometimes once a month when an event is coming up, other times we may go two months before we meet. The next meeting will be on May 8, 2019 at my house, 1179 Wejegi Dr, Richfield. We'll be discussing whether we should change the price for Mill & House tours and other issues for upcoming events. If you have ANY comments or suggestions about an event, let me know. If you would like to see what we are working on or would like information about a meeting, contact me. Daryl Grier, 262 628-4221 [dgrier@charter.net](mailto:dgrier@charter.net)

**Step Back in Time With Your Family**

Richfield Nature/Historical Park  
 Sunday, June 9, 2019 and Sunday, Aug 11, 2019  
 1p.m. – 4 p.m.

- Learn how day-to-day duties were done long ago.
- At the Blacksmith Shop make a leaf to take home
  - At the Sugar Shack learn how to make maple syrup
  - At the Log Cabin do laundry washing and pioneer cooking
  - At the Log Barn shell corn



Arrive early to allow time to visit all four buildings.

Admission: \$5; Children 5 & Under, Free. Refreshments available for sale.

For more information visit [richfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://richfieldhistoricalsociety.org)

**Save Books** Reminder to save books to be sold at the Threshere in the Sweets 'n Stuff tent.

Contact Daryl Grier, [dgrier@charter.net](mailto:dgrier@charter.net) 262 628-4221 with any questions.

**All proceeds benefit our society!**

### **Richfield Art at the Mill – July 27, 2019**

We are looking forward to some warm weather after our long Wisconsin winter. **July 27<sup>th</sup>** will be our 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Art at the Mill event (10a.m. – 4p.m.). Plans and preparations are all under way. We are securing artists, vendors, food, silent auction items, and music to make this one as successful as the last!

We are constantly looking for more artists' names/e-mails to add to our already comprehensive list to ensure that we get a good showing and nice mix of artisans. Please ask everyone you know to mark their calendars for a truly fun event in a beautiful historical setting.

(We may have a bit of a challenge this year with Hwy 164 under construction and the Hwy 164/167 intersection likely closed. However, the Hwy 164 entrance into the Park will be accessible from the north on Hwy 164. We will make sure that we mark the detours from the south clearly.)

### **Historic Sites**

### **Quint Mueller**

With the coming of spring, comes a new season of projects for the RHS crew; actually it's a continual process. Our crew rarely takes a break from projects.

There are several large projects that we hope to address this season. One of those is the start of the Mill Engine Shed. Due to soil conditions discovered while rebuilding the Mill foundation, it was determined the Engine Shed foundation needed to be redesigned. This process is well underway, but it is setting the start of construction back. A little patience now will lead to a better foundation and save RHS a significant amount of money in the design process. We still hope to start construction of the Engine Shed foundation this year.

Another big project this year will be building and replacing storm windows on the Mill House and Lillicrapp Welcome Center. Many of the storm windows on both of these buildings have deteriorated to a point that they are beyond repair. Like most RHS projects, this will be a volunteer project. Our talented crew will be constructing new storm windows from scratch. It will be a lot of work; but considering the number of windows that need replacing, it will be a very significant savings. Plus, it will be another RHS project that we can be proud of. This likely will not be completed this year, but we should be able to get a good start.

The other project that needs to be mentioned is the replanting of trees in the Historical Park. As you are all aware by now, our park was not spared from the ravage of the emerald ash borer beetle. Unfortunately, there was a very high percentage of ash trees at the north end of the Park. Right now, it's a rather sad site, compared to what we had just two or three years ago. RHS has been planning for tree replacements for a number of years now, even before the infestation of the EAB. We've planted many bare root stock trees in the last few years. Most of those are still too young to be of any shade value. We have already begun to transplant some trees from within the Park. We are also working with local businesses to help re-populate the Park. (This time, it will be with a plan, not just left up to the squirrels.) This project, perhaps, will require the greatest amount of patience of any RHS project, as these new trees will not grow to maturity for many years.



Rest assured, the RHS crew isn't sitting back and relaxing. They're constantly tackling new projects from small to large year round. There is quite a long list of projects every year. If you think you might like to be part of this crew, please contact myself or Del Schmechel or find us on our website.

## Lillicrapp Welcome Center

**Aerona Smith**

We are pleased to have on display in the LWC General Store several Sears Catalogues, the earliest dating to 1902. In 1886, the R.W. Sears Watch Company was founded by Richard Sears in Minneapolis MN, and he later partnered with Alvah Roebuck. In 1887, the Sears Watch Company published its first mail-order catalogue which included only watches and jewelry. That same year, the company moved to Chicago, Illinois. The merchandise lines grew by leaps and bounds. Some of the changes that enhanced the catalogue included:

- 1894 catalogue featured women, men and children's clothing, firearms, buggies.
- 1895 thru 1896 increased the number of catalogues to include spring, winter, as well as specialty books (e.g. sewing machines, bicycles, pianos and organs)
- 1897 catalogue featured builder's hardware and materials (Sears sold all supplies needed to construct a building.)
- 1899 color images were added to the catalogue (first line of merchandise = shoes.)



In rural towns at the time, farmers purchased supplies at their local general store. Prices varied from one store to another from one town to the next. Sears Catalogues offered a much wider selection of products with clearly stated, affordable prices.

### **1902 Sears Catalogue**

Customer service always remained very important to Richard Sears. Richard Sears knew the importance of keeping customers. He was a master at slogans and advertising. In his 1903 catalogue he stated, "Your money back if not satisfied." For another 20 years, he guided the company. Richard resigned from the company in November, 1908. Due to changes in the retail industry, the last Sears "big book" was published in 1993.

When you visit during our events, come to the General Store in the Welcome Center where you will see the Sears Catalogues on display.

## Library/Program/Newsletter

**Marge Holzbog**

The RHS Library Committee will have four publications available for purchase at the Lillicrapp Welcome Center during our 2019 events or by ordering at 262 251 3882.

Richfield Remembers the Past	\$ 50.00	Life on the Farm	\$ 12.00
Richfield Cookbook	\$ 12.00	Downtown Richfield	\$ 15.00

Do visit the RHS History Room at LWC in 2019 where we will have on display Richfield, Washington County and Wisconsin maps covering the early years of 1859, 1873 and 1892 as well as Richfield's original survey map from 1833. Wisconsin glacial and vegetation maps from 1881 will also be available for viewing.



## Membership

**Warren Wiedmeyer**

As Membership Chairperson, I am always exploring ways to inspire people to become members of the RHS. During our special events you may see me talking to our visitors about joining the RHS. But sometimes I am asked "What's in it for me, or what is the benefit of doing so?" I get it. These are valid questions.

Becoming involved with an organization usually starts by being inspired by what the organization stands for, what they are doing for the community, their mission statement, etc. We are lucky in that the purpose of the RHS is very clear. We exist to educate the public about the history of Richfield and the people who founded it. We are accomplishing this purpose by providing special programs on topics relevant to history at our General Meetings and as well as in this newsletter you are currently reading. These are the significant benefits that your membership dollars provide. Without an organization like the Richfield Historical Society, our community's history could just fade away and just become an afterthought. So, a key benefit to being a member of the RHS is knowing that you are INVOLVED in helping us fulfill our mission and purpose.

Many of you have also been generous in your donations, and your dollars really make a difference! Your donation dollars and monies raised at our numerous events allow us to carry out new projects such as the Engine Shed project, one of several current projects, currently in its design phase. The completion of this project, which entails a small building to be attached to the south side of the Grist Mill, will enable us to power the mill stones within the Mill. This is one project, of many, along with dollars spent at our numerous events that help fund these projects. Donation dollars are significant to helping us bring this history back to life

So, getting back to the question of "what's in it for me?" If you value history; if you are proud of your community; if you know that every dollar is well spent; and if you know that 100% of your membership and donation dollars are helping to make all of this happen; then the benefit to you is not some tangible thing that you can buy and take home. But, instead it can provide a profound sense of satisfaction in knowing that YOU are part of something bigger. That YOU are making a difference in our community. So take pride in your membership! You have a LOT to be proud about.

## Mill House

**Clara Birkel/Cindy Schmechel**

Carl Wilhelm Mayer and Mary Anna Kurtz were married in Richfield, Wisconsin on 12 October 1887. Ten months later, in August 1888, they welcomed the birth of their first child, a daughter they named Louise Georgiana Mayer. C.W. and Mary Anna then went on to welcome the births of five boys into their family; George, born April 1890, Frederick, born June 1892, Edwin, born June 1895, Arthur, born November 1897 and Carl Milton, born March 1899. Mary Anna then had a rest from having babies for a few years; but, lo and behold, on January 4, 1903 she gave birth to one last child, a precious daughter they named Marie Amalia Mayer.

**Marie Amalia Mayer**

At the Messer/Mayer Mill House, bedroom #3 has many of Marie's possessions on display, including the bedroom set she once used. Hanging on the door to the room is the beautiful white Christening gown that she wore on the day of her baptism in 1903, with a photo of that day on the far wall. The room is very feminine, painted in a soft pink color with a beautiful white, pink and green flower basket patterned quilt on the bed. The dressing table, chest of drawers, bed headboard and footboard, all original to the house. are all





painted white and are in remarkably good condition. Items left behind by the young lady who had occupied the room are curling irons, combs and brushes, along with various hair pins and other ladies' needs of the day.

Not much is known of the day-to-day life that Marie shared with her six siblings. Her sister, Louise, was fifteen years older, so she probably helped their mother, Mary Anna, to care for little Marie. The sibling closest in age to her was Milton, who most likely had little use for a baby sister at that time. He had four older brothers to pester and play with, so the new baby would have been little more than a distraction to four year old Milton.

On September 16, 1933, Marie married Lester Frank Goetsch. The couple lived in Milwaukee where Lester worked as an insurance underwriter and Marie worked as a waitress at the downtown restaurant known as the Wisconsin Club. According to family members interviewed for this article, Marie was quite pretty and very popular. Lester and Marie never had any children of their own, but her niece, Carol Mayer Woods, said that following her graduation from high school in 1950, Marie did Carol's laundry for her while she was attending school to become a beautician in Milwaukee. Lester apparently had played semi-pro baseball as a young man, and they both enjoyed going to old Borchert Field to watch baseball games. Also, according to Carol and her husband Bob, Marie loved to bake, especially cookies which she would give to family and friends. She always made them for family reunions and, in her later years, even shared them with her fellow residents at Alexian Village in Milwaukee. One of Marie's favorite cookie recipes was even published in the first Richfield Historical Society's cookbook.

Lester Goetsch passed away on January 9, 1980 at the age of 73. Marie Mayer Goetsch passed away at her Alexian Village residence on Sunday, December 20, 1998, just several weeks shy of her 96<sup>th</sup> birthday. According to her obituary, Marie was remembered for her love of family, her love of gardening and her generous spirit.

## Mill Restoration

## Harry Niemann

Oliver Evans was a prolific inventor of many industrial things, including steam engines, wool carding machines, and milling equipment.

He was born on Sept. 13, 1755 in Delaware, the fifth child of twelve. Early on he professed an interest in all things mechanical. As a boy, his contemporaries thought he would never amount to much as he was always tinkering with this or that. As a young man he became intrigued by flour mills and their inefficiencies. He and his brother bought a flour mill and set to work improving it.



**Oliver Evans Grain Elevators  
in the Messer Mayer Mill**

Mills up to then involved much hand work by several people. The millers would haul sacks of grain on their backs up four floors to be dumped into a bin then moved by hand through the various processes of cleaning, grinding, and sifting to result in flour.

Oliver Evans came up with an idea using a series of small cups mounted on an endless canvas belt which picked up the grain and moved it from the first floor up to the fourth. There the grain would travel down through chutes to each operation, then picked up by another cup elevator and sent back up again to the upper floor and on to the next step. This automated the process of milling so it could become basically a one man operation.



When the national patent office was formed in 1790, the third patent issued was to Oliver Evans for this milling process. Both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson bought licenses to operate their mills with this process.

Oliver Evans spent the last dozen years of his life suing millers up and down the Eastern seaboard for patent infringement. He died in 1819.

**Pioneer Homestead**

**Susan Sawdey**

The Pioneer Homestead has a busy summer planned for 2019. The upcoming installation of the “Whopper” laundry stove from the Atlanta Stove Works will move us into the modern age of Pioneer Homesteader heating and cooking.

Stop by and help us make daily soups at all of our events. Homemade lye soap making is also on our chore list. Lard was rendered at our Maple Syrup Family Day and is the first step in the soap making process. At our next events, we will be leaching our own lye. The Thresherees will culminate the soap making process where we need muscle power from our visitors to help stir our ingredients together to make our soap.

Don't worry, the Pioneer Homestead will be tiring out the youngsters with our regular interactive activities of grinding corn, laundry, sauerkraut making and much more. Give us a hand at the Pioneer Homestead this summer, there is plenty of work to do!

**PIONEER HOMESTEAD RECIPE**

**Apple Butter (2018 Thresherees)**

- 12/14 cooking apples about 16 cups chopped
- 2 cups cider
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp cloves

Core & chop apples, do not peel. Combine apples & cider in a crock pot. Cover & cook on low for 10/12 hours until mushy. Puree. Return mixture to pot: add sugar & spices. Cover & cook on low for 1 hour. Will keep for several weeks in fridg. Or process for 10 minutes. (Regular canning kettle) Also freezes well. Makes about 8 cups

Original recipe by Joan Lewandowski East Troy, Wisconsin

**Project Coordinator**

**Del Schmechel**

We have an exciting list of projects for 2019 that will make the Historical Park even more enjoyable and educational.

You will see the construction of an engine shed attached to the south wall of our Grist Mill. It will house the engine that has operated at our Thresherees' for several years. The goal is to use it to power the large mill stone and other equipment. This will allow us to “Get it Grinding.”

Our log cabin will be outfitted with a wood burning stove. This should complete the experience of living in a one room cabin. You will be drawn in by the scent of soup simmering over a wood fire. You can expect to observe work such as rendering fat and the making of lye to make soap. This would have been a normal task done before a trip to the store was possible.



We are putting a lot of effort into adding a culvert bridge to replace our current foot bridge to the threshing area. This will allow our people movers to make round trips, allowing people to visit all areas of our park. The traffic will then move in one direction along the current park road.

We will complete the rain gutters and down spouts on our Welcome Center. This work may go unnoticed by most of our guests, but will help protect the foundation and landscape.

We are starting to reinstall equipment that had been removed from the basement of our Grist Mill to allow for the foundation work. This equipment is necessary to power equipment such as the grain elevators and milling equipment.

Projects, both large and small, are necessary to carry out our mission, to preserve and promote our local history. It's important to visit the Historical Park often to see the improvements we frequently make. Please speak to any of our staff if you have questions about opportunities available at your Richfield Historical Society.

## Volunteer Coordinator

Sharon Lofy

### Plant Sale

**SPRING!!!** is here, but we do not know what it has in store for us. This does not keep us from planning gardens, flower beds and plant containers. **Be sure to purchase plant certificates for flower and vegetable plants.** Nehm's Greenhouse (Sunny Point Gardens) will again work with the Richfield Historical Society for our annual **Plant Sale Fundraiser.** Everyone has at least one spot for a plant. Remember to purchase plant certificates (\$25 & \$15) for gifts – Mom's Day, Birthdays, Anniversaries, Get Well Wishes and for a Thank You. A certificate might do well to inspire a person to become a new gardener. You should have received an email or a call. **This year use your certificates only at Nehm's Greenhouse, 3639 Hwy 175, Slinger. If you have any questions about ordering, please call 262-297-1546.**

### On Line Volunteer Sign-Up

The Antique Appraisal and Chili Lunch went well despite the weather. This was our first try at using an on-line volunteer sign-up. You should have received an email explaining how to use the site for signing up as a volunteer. It described the areas and time frames that needed your help. In turn, you placed your name and telephone number in the spot that worked for you to give us a helping hand. We will do this again for the Art Fair in July. Watch for the email. If you have any questions or comments, let me know. I will give those without an email a call.

### Volunteers Needed

If you know of someone that would like to help, give them my phone number. It's always fun to work with someone that you know. In fact, some volunteers check with others to work the same shift. If you have an interest in being a tour guide (Mill, House, Welcome Center), helping in the Pioneer Homestead, Thursday Crew, baking, computer work, conductor on the people mover, being on a committee, chairing a committee; please give a call. There are other areas that I have not mentioned. We always have a need for volunteers. After your call, I will pass your name along to the chair of that area. They will give you information and help you to volunteer in that area.

So, mark your calendar for the Art Fair (July 27) and the Thresheree (Sept. 21 & 22.) The Richfield Historical Society is all about volunteers who have an interest in keeping RHS growing - from the Board, to Committee Chairs and their committees, to the Thursday Crew, and all our members plus relatives, neighbors and friends of RHS.



**Events –**

**Step Back in Time With Your Family – June 9, 2019 & August 11, 2019 - 1:00 p.m. – 4 p.m.**  
Richfield Nature/Historical Park

**Richfield Art at the Mill – July 27, 2019 - 10 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.** Richfield Historical Park

**Threshere & Harvest Festival – September 21 & 22, 2019** – details in your Summer/Fall Newsletter

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

**May 23, 2019** The Sinking of Lady Elgin - Paul Timm  
Programs will not be held the months of June, July and August.

Watch your summer/fall newsletter for the fall program schedule.  
The dates are: September 26, 2019 . . . October 24, 2019 . . . November 21, 2019

**Book Club** – Meets the third Thursday of the month at 1:00 P.M. at the “Nutman” on the corner of Hwy. 175 & Hubertus Road. All are welcome! Call 262 251 3882 for book selections.

*11th Annual Richfield*  
**Art at the Mill**  
July 27, 2019 ~ 10am – 4pm  
Art & Fine Craft Fair  
Many Talented Artists ~ Variety of Vendors  
Live Music ~ Great Food ~ Silent Auction  
Free Parking ~ Admission: \$2  
Tour of Historic Buildings (small fee)



Richfield Historical Park, 1896 State Rd. 164  
Richfield, WI — Washington County (See Detour Map on Back)

[richfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://richfieldhistoricalsociety.org)   

