



*Richfield Historical Society*  
*P.O. Box 268*  
*Richfield, Wisconsin 53076*  
[www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org)

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**The Hollenstein Wagon & Carriage Factory – Mayville, Wisconsin**

The Mayville Historical Society is fortunate to have its home in a relatively unaltered characteristic late nineteenth century industrial/residential building. The Hollenstein Wagon & Carriage Factory, along with the connected house, are of particular interest as they reflect the way of life of many small factory owners. The scale of the factory, the way it grew, and the manner in which each addition blended into the original architecture reveal the transition from local tradesman to small industrialist so typical of small town Wisconsin history.

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*Mill Restoration*

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*Museum*

*Jean Happel*

*Norb Berres*

*Project Coordinator*

*Del Schmechel*



The Hollenstein Wagon & Carriage Factory is on the NW corner of Bridge and German Streets in Mayville, Wisconsin. It was given recognition in January of 1979 on the National Register of Historic Places. The wagon factory and home form a large ell at the corner.

John Hollenstein, Sr. was born in St. Gallen, Switzerland in 1842 where he learned the wagon maker's trade at an early age. He married Dominica Zuestin in 1868 and the couple immigrated to America the following year first settling in Woodland,

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Wisconsin in Dodge County. Then in 1873, the couple moved to Mayville, a predominantly German community. There Hollenstein went into the wheelwright, wagon and carriage business with William Albrecht, a blacksmith. He purchased the west half of the present factory property in 1876. (The house and original portion of the factory may have been standing at the time of purchase.)

By 1888, Albrecht had left the partnership; Hollenstein purchased an adjacent lot and added a 40 foot by 60 foot addition for a blacksmith shop and added area for building wagons, coaches, omnibuses, etc. By 1892, the small wagon shop had grown to a substantial wagon and carriage factory employing several skilled mechanics and workers.

During the 1890s, Hollenstein advertised a line of fourteen wagons, sleighs, carriages, buggies and horse drawn omnibuses (in demand by hotelkeepers for guest transport) in all the popular shapes and sizes. His carriages did not become popular by “happen chance,” but rather because the factory’s products were of superior character over the ordinary makes to which public attention had been attracted.

“Quality not Quantity” was the Hollenstein motto. He used the utmost care in the selection and use of materials – no cross-grain or brash wood used, only the best iron and best made wheels, springs, paint and varnish. No hasty or slighted work was permitted. All underwent a most rigorous inspection insuring when leaving the factory every detail of the vehicle was complete.

Hollenstein personally supervised each branch of his business and proved himself not only a superior and talented mechanic but a businessman of exceptional capability. With a stellar reputation, he sold goods all over the state as he continued his trade as a wagon maker. He worked alongside his employees. He trained his son, John Jr., in the wagon maker’s trade. When Hollenstein had a serious injury in the factory while running a planer, his right hand being caught in the knives cutting off three fingers and badly lacerating the index finger, John Jr. now assumed responsibility for the factory. The factory continued to prosper into the twentieth century employing as many as ten men in the wagon factory in 1913.

The mass production of inexpensive automobiles and trucks led to the decline and demise of the Hollenstein business. In 1941, the property and buildings were sold to a tool and die shop. By the mid-1960s, the building was vacant. When acquired by the Mayville Historical Society in June 1972, it had been badly vandalized and faced condemnation by the city.

### **THE HOLLENSTEIN FAMILY**

**Back row (left to right):**

**Francis Hollenstein Gasper, John Jr., Jake, Adolf, Alvina Hollenstein Heppe**

**Front row (left to right):**

**Helen (Lena) Hollenstein McMahan,  
Dominica Zuest Hollenstein, George, John  
Hollenstein Sr.**



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The Hollenstein family came from Entenbach-Muherudi Switzerland living in a comfortable home in the beautiful Swiss countryside. Johann Baptiste Hollenstein and Maria Catherine Widmer had ten children three of which became active businessmen in Dodge/Washington County, Wisconsin.

Above you have read about the second Hollenstein son, Johann Joseph, who established the Hollenstein Wagon and Carriage Factory in Mayville, Wisconsin.

Closer to Richfield, on Main Street in Hartford, Wisconsin, first born son, Johann Baptiste, established a bakery. His bakery was the second building to the east of the corner of Hwy 60 and Main Street on the northeast corner. His first wife, Jeanne Marie Rapin died in Switzerland leaving a daughter, Lena, who came to America in 1871 with her father and stepmother, Elizabeth (Louisa) Domen.

George Anton, youngest son, also came to America. He first lived in Rubicon but later worked on the Schroeder farm in St. Augustine. He was to become a substantial landowner owning 110 acres in Section 12 of Erin Township on Shannon Road. George Anton married Susanne Loth from the Town of Erin and together they had fifteen children. He and his wife as well as sons John, Joe and Albert are all buried at St. Augustine Cemetery in Richfield.

Second son of George Anton and Susanne Loth, Joe, ran a cheese factory on Hwy 167 just across the street (northwest corner of Hwy 167 and St. Augustine Road) from the family farm. When he was called to World War I, he left for basic training in Texas in August of 1918 leaving his younger brother Frank in charge of the cheese factory. He was sent to France in October 1918 and having seen action for only two weeks was killed on November 4<sup>th</sup>. He was buried there. His last letter to his folks was received after his death, and notification of his death came months later. When the war was over, his body was disinterred and shipped home in a body bag arriving in Hartford from New York by train in March 1921. His body was taken to the family home on Shannon Road by horse and carriage. His body was badly mutilated, and, as was customary, the arms and legs of the deceased had been cut off and placed at the side of the body. (This made it easier for burial and shipping.) But, his brother Herbert was able to identify him from his red hair and one gold tooth at the front of his mouth. Joe's funeral was the talk of the town, and a military funeral with a three gun salute and taps as his body was lowered to rest was held at St. Augustine Church in Richfield.



Cheese Factory (Later to become the Lofy General Store and today a home.)

Helena, the eldest daughter of George Anton and Susanne Loth, married Peter Riesch and had two daughters, Alice and Jeannette. Peter left Helena to fend for herself when the girls were just 2 and 4 years of age. Helena obtained a job at the Fox N' Hounds Restaurant near Holy Hill where for 40 years she held the job of Maitre'D. Because she had no place to live, Mr. Wolf, owner of the restaurant, built her a log cabin attached to the lower part of the restaurant. Here is where she and the girls lived while she worked inside allowing her to check on the girls every now and then while she was working. After leaving the Fox N' Hounds, she found work as a housekeeper for John Dexheimer, a photographer in Menomonee Falls. He adored Helena and called her "Frau Riesch."

### CURRIER & IVES – Printmakers to the American People

In 1834, Nathaniel Currier formed his first partnership, Andrew Jackson was President, Texas still belonged to Mexico, the great west was a wilderness, and the industrial revolution had yet to penetrate what was still an agricultural nation. Currier's lifetime covered the conquest of the West, the harnessing of steam, the rise of industrialism, the Civil War and its aftermath of reconstruction and unification.

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These were the years that cried for accurate and graphic presentation to a public increasingly alive to the tempo of the times. The firms of N. Currier and later Currier & Ives provided generously in the form of inexpensive, finely executed lithographic prints that made their way into nearly every home and in an amazingly short time became an American institution.

The Currier & Ives prints covered a wide variety of subject matter from reproductions of oil paintings by the finest artists of the day, from sentimental scenes to portraits of the great. There were prints of disasters, wrecks, of Mexican and Civil War land and naval battles, of clipper ships and whalers, of railroads and fire scenes. There were political cartoons and campaign banners, portraits of presidents, and of such notables as Tom Thumb, panoramic views of cities and scenes of farms, country life, scenes that depicted the winning of the West and life among the Indians, sporting prints, hunting and fishing pictures and prints as varied and colorful as America itself.



The entire collection of seven thousand or more prints that are now known forms a great panoramic picture of mid-nineteenth century America. Currier gave the public pictures that were easy to understand and appreciate, pictures that were typically American, and pictures not only with subjects that were within the knowledge and experience of the average man but at prices within the range of his pocketbook. Currier prints in their heyday were found on the walls of barrooms, barbershops, firehouses and hotels as well as of the homes of the rich and poor alike.

Today the same prints sold by the thousands for five to twenty five cents, never more than three dollars for the large folios, are eagerly sought as collectors' items. When the coming of lithography, photography and photoengraving, newspapers and illustrated weeklies began to take a prominent place in American life, the hand-colored lithographs of Currier & Ives began to go out of vogue.

## SOCIETY NEWS

### PRESIDENT

Frank "Buzz" Carr

Our largest event, the Thresheree, was held on September 19 and 20. It was very successful this year with good weather and good crowds on both days. I hope that many of you were able to visit the Park and enjoy the Thresheree and that you will put it on your calendar for next year. It's always the third weekend in September.

One of the events that we had during the Thresheree was the dedication of the new brick walkway leading from the new parking lot to the Lillicrapp House Welcome Center. The walkway contains the bricks signifying the many donors that have given at least \$500 towards the reconstruction of the Mill foundation. It is a great installation, and you should take a look the next time that you are in the Park. Think about making a donation and getting a brick with your name or your family's name on it.

The next event was Christmas at the Mill House on December 6th when we had the Mill House decorated for the holiday and welcomed guests with music and fresh baked bread and cookies.

The new year will start with The Antique Appraisal and Chili Lunch to be held on February 21, 2016. It is our version of Antiques Road Show, but it is even better because ours comes with tasty chili. You can bring some of your family treasures to see if you have been rich all these years and didn't know it! This is one of our cold weather events, and it provides a great opportunity to get out of the house and

have some fun with your fellow members. Our next cold weather event is the Maple Syrup Family Day on March 26, 2016. Bring the family out to learn about making maple syrup, sample a taste of this original sweet syrup known to the native people of our region, and take a tour of the Mill and the Mill House.

My two years as President of our great Richfield Historical Society is drawing to a close. As of the start of the new year, Jim Metzger will assume the reins as President, but I will not be riding off into the sunset. I will continue to serve on the Board of Directors as immediate Past President, and I will try my best to get things done for RHS in whatever capacity I can.

It has been a terrific two years. We have had many wonderful events - the capital campaign has continued to raise money for the reconstruction of the Mill foundation, and we have completed some projects and started others. All in all, I am happy to say that we have moved forward as an organization and the future looks promising.

As I have mentioned before, the strength of RHS is our volunteer base. We literally have hundreds of volunteers that make our events not only possible but really enjoyable for our guests. I can't tell you how many times I have heard guests mention that our events are so nice because of the friendly volunteers.

So, in closing, I would urge you to consider becoming a volunteer at one of our events or for the Thursday crew – the guys that keep the Park and the buildings looking so great. Call Sharon Lofy at 262 297 1546 to volunteer for an event or Del Schmechel at 262 628 0919 if you want to help with the Park and buildings. You will have fun helping RHS and will meet a great group of people who will become your new friends.

Thank you all for your support during my tenure as President, and I hope to see you at future events.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE** **Sharon Lofy**

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Letters informing Senior Centers about the Richfield Historical Society's "Traveling Trunk" are on their way. The "Traveling Trunk" (suitcase on wheels) contains items from the past. Items range from marbles to a canning jar, wooden potato masher to an iron rug beater, an iron (for ironing clothes) that was heated on a wood stove to metal ice skates that clamped onto one's shoes. Volunteers show each item. They ask members of the audience whether they recognize the item. Also, members of the audience are asked whether they have an item of their own to show.

There are four trunks. Each trunk contains different items along with some duplicates. We have a great group of volunteers that take the trunks to their destination. The Committee is always looking for persons interested in helping. You are also always welcome to come along on a visit. Two or three volunteers always work together to present the trunk. Let me know if you have an interest in helping. If you know of any organization or group (schools or seniors) that would be interested in information about the "Traveling Trunk," – call 262 297 1546.

The Education Committee, along with Kathy Weberg's guidance and organization, in May 2016 will again present two "Activity Education Days" for area schools. Third graders from area schools will be invited to attend. They will spend the day (bringing their lunch) at the Richfield Historical Park. Learning stations will be set up at the Mill, Mill House, Wood Shed, Log Cabin, Log Barn, and Sugar Shack. Blacksmithing and early farming demonstrations will also be offered. Students will learn about how grain was ground at the Mill. Household chores will be shown at many stations, as you know, children and adults had specific things to do each day back in the Mill era. Check with your family and youth in the area to learn whether they will be participating in RHS's activity days.

Thank you volunteers for making the 17<sup>th</sup> Annual RHS's Thresheree a huge success. Everyone worked together and focused on making this a successful event. Our events cannot run smoothly without the teamwork and dedication of its volunteers. The hours needed to organize the 2016 event are already underway.

**EVENTS COORDINATOR**

**Daryl Grier**

**RICHFIELD ANTIQUE APPRAISAL & CHILI LUNCH** – February 21, 2016 – Diane Pedersen

Ever wonder what your dusty relics in the attic are worth? February is the time of year we often long for the warmth of summer and visiting with friends. The Richfield Historical Society's Antique Appraisal and Chili Lunch is the place you can stay warm, discover the value of your antiques, and enjoy friends along with tasty chili.

The 8th Annual Antique Appraisal and Chili Lunch will be held at the Richfield Fire Company Station #1, 2008 State Rd. 175, Richfield, WI. on February 21, 2016. Multiple appraisers will be at your service.

**FOOD** – While you wait to have your items appraised enjoy a bowl of our homemade, tasty Fire House Chili. We offer your favorite, a bowl of chili with fixings such as onions, sour cream and cheddar cheese. If you have been to the Appraisal before, you will remember the delicious corn meal muffins and tasty brownie all included for \$6.00.

**BRING THE KIDS** – The menu has been upgraded this year for children and adults. Enjoy chili dogs and gristmill pie, better known as sawdust pie, donated by The Sawmill Inn in Richfield. Chili dogs are \$2.00, plain hot dogs are \$1.50. While brownies are included with the chili meal, they may also be purchased separately for \$.50 per square. The gristmill pie is \$2.00 per slice.

Winter is long and this mid-winter event is one you won't want to miss. And, it's right here in Richfield – you don't have to fight the traffic heading up north or into the city. Join us once, and you'll return again and again. So, mark your calendar; and we will see you there.

This event supports the projects of the Richfield Historical Society, in particular the restoration of the Messer/Mayer Mill.

**Date:** February 21, 2016  
**Hours:** 10 am to 3 pm (rain, snow or shine)  
**Parking:** 2008 State Rd. 175, Richfield, WI 53076  
**Admission:** Free  
**Appraisals per Item:** \$5.00

**More information:**  
 Visit [www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org)  
**Presented by:** Richfield Historical Society  
**Questions:** Call 262-628-1827

**YARN FUNDRAISER**– Diane Pedersen

The Richfield Historical Society is requesting yarn be donated for a fundraiser to help "Get the Mill Grinding." We have the opportunity to have a crocheted blanket, colors will depend on what is donated. The blanket will be available at the 2016 Thresheree.

Bring your yarn donation, a yarn weight of #4 as noted on the label, to the RHS program meeting January 28th or February 25th. The Richfield Village Hall will also accept your yarn Monday thru Friday 7:30 am to 4 pm through February 29th. We hope to see you at the 2016 Thresheree September 17th and 18th where you can see and bid on this special blanket.

Good news! Phase 2 of the Mill foundation repair has been completed. This marks a major step forward in the Capital Campaign to “get it grinding.”

This phase consisted of creating an access to the basement with a retaining wall and landscaping on the east side of the Mill. The completion of this project makes it possible for public tours of the Mill basement. People will now be able to get a better understanding of how the Mill was built and functioned with water power. (I would also like to note that this project was completed considerably under budget.) A thank you to Duquaine Concrete and Masonry of West Bend for working with RHS on Phase 2.



Retaining wall on the east side of the Mill

The November 7<sup>th</sup> Thresheree Wrap-Up and Pot Luck was well attended at Shepard of the Hills Church in Hubertus. Thanks to the volunteers who helped make our 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Thresheree another success. (Note pictures on the following page.)

Plans are underway for the 18<sup>th</sup> Thresheree to be held September 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016. The 2016 feature will be “Anvils and Blacksmith Tools.” This is in anticipation of the dedication at the 2017 Thresheree of the blacksmith shop being built in the RHS Park.

2015 has been another banner year for projects at the RHS Park. A major task completed has been the painting of the Mill House. The paint was donated by the Hallman/Lindsay Paint Store in Richfield. This is the second major paint project that store manager Chris Wagner has helped us with. He also came to the Park to make recommendations on prepping and products to use. Thank you Dave Derrick, Ed Kyle and the rest of the Thursday Crew that did the work.



Ed Kyle & Dave Derrick at work



Completed job

The Thursday Crew has been truly remarkable in completing projects. The team brings a wide variety of talents to focus on the things to be done. From electrical to carpentry to landscaping, painting and more; they get it done. Del Schmechel does a good job coordinating work projects. I also want to mention Chuck Boesel. His heart and soul are at the Park. He contributes countless hours working on general maintenance along with clipping grass, planting and watering flowers and trees.

**17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL THRESHEREE**



**LIBRARY/PROGRAM/NEWSLETTER**

**Marge Holzbog**

John Gurda, noted Milwaukee born writer and historian, has just published a stellar new book called “Milwaukee: City of Neighborhoods.” The common thread in all of Gurda’s work is an underlying history of “why things are the way they are.”

Gurda tells us geography matters in Milwaukee. At the very beginning of white settlement, the fledgling metropolis was divided by its rivers into three rival villages – Juneautown, Kilbourntown, and Walkers Point – that evolved over decades into East, North, West and South sides of today. Within these districts, like pieces of a puzzle, are imbedded dozens of smaller communities. Viewed from a grassroots perspective, Milwaukee is most definitely a city of neighborhoods.



Milwaukee’s City Hall

“Milwaukee: City of Neighborhoods” is the most comprehensive account of grassroots Milwaukee ever published. Based on the popular series of posters published by the City of Milwaukee in the 1980s, the book features both historical chronicles and contemporary portraits of thirty-seven neighborhoods that emerged in Milwaukee before WW II. The book is worth adding to any library. It is richly illustrated, engagingly written, and organized for maximum ease of use. “Milwaukee: City of Neighborhoods” is a fine-grained introduction to the community, and its communities, that will endure as a standard work for years to come.

**LILICRAPP HOUSE**

**Aerona Smith**

The Lillicrapp Welcome Center just completed its first year featuring the General Store” theme. We were open for the Society’s summer and fall events. The 17<sup>th</sup> Annual Thresheree was our busiest event. During that event, on both Saturday and Sunday, a presentation by RHS President Frank Carr took place at the Welcome Center for the donor recognition bricks. Afterwards friends and members gathered and enjoyed refreshments.

Visitors enjoyed the General Store displays and photos. The Richfield General Store pictures generated a lot of interest and much conversation. The two most recognizable stores were the Stuetgen General Store & Tavern, which is now known as Sloppy Joe’s, and Laubenheimer’s General Store which has been known as Amici’s Restaurant.

Across from the collage of general store photos is the heart of the general store; the storekeeper’s counter. The countertop features a large 1900 double wheel coffee grinder, paper-cutter, bag holder, scales, a 1904 cash register, and of course candy jars for the children. In earlier times, many of these items were considered a necessity for the storekeeper’s business.

A special thank you to all my volunteers and those who donated or loaned items to the Welcome Center. (An updated wish list for LCH is on the RHS web site.) I also wish to welcome two new committee members, Dorothy Marks and Fran Lofy. We are always looking for volunteers to join us. No job is considered too small. If interested, please call Aerona Smith at 262-628-9909. Please visit us in 2016. The General Store theme will continue and new displays will be added.

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**LONG TERM PLANNING****Jim Metzger**

We have all heard this saying before, “it is more about the journey than the destination.” So it is with the Richfield Historical Society (RHS).

In the late 1990s a very energetic and creative group of people agreed to preserve history by restoring the Messer/Mayer Grist Mill in Richfield along with the other buildings present in the Richfield Historical Park.

Upon examination, it was found that the Mill foundation walls, built in the 1870s, were failing and were in need of repair. A committee was formed to secure an estimated cost and how to proceed with the repair. A cost estimate of well over \$700,000.00 was obtained from credible sources. The work, using period correct methods and materials, was to be done in three phases.

With little money to work with and minimal taxpayer dollars available from the Village of Richfield, the highly motivated Board of Directors went into action developing many fundraising activities. Three main fundraisers along with several smaller ones account for a steady stream of funds used for this purpose. A Capital Campaign Committee was also set up to raise additional funds dedicated to the Mill foundation restoration. Phase one and two have been completed to date. Phase three, the most costly phase, is next. Since the latest quote for phase three is over 3 years old, the earlier quote will need to be updated.

Our vision for the Park, at this time, is a fully functioning Grist Mill and sawmill and an enclosed common area building with all indoor facilities that can be used for many social functions. Other attractions like a functioning blacksmith shop now under construction and projects to be named in the future will allow RHS to continually freshen its offerings at the Park. Also being considered is a functioning farm across Pleasant Hill Road to include displays of farming equipment manufactured in the area.

Our goal is to preserve history in Richfield, as Old World Wisconsin does in southeastern Wisconsin. The difference is, even though Old World Wisconsin is a marvelous testament to times past, they do not have a working grist mill filled with original grinding equipment and their buildings are not on their original site.

The common thread here, in long range planning, is both the need for additional capital and manpower. While both are the life blood of the project, manpower is by far the most important. Today we have a very dedicated RHS Board of Directors, a hard working work crew, numerous volunteers, as well as an ever growing RHS membership. All are nonpaid for their service.

These people contribute many thousands of volunteer hours yearly and are rewarded by seeing the growth of the Historical Park and the Mill becoming functional. Over 200 volunteers alone are needed to host our largest fundraiser, the Thresheree held in September. If you have ever attended this event or any other of our events, you will be impressed.

The RHS thanks every person and business that has contributed money and most of all time to this effort. As you can see, this is a huge undertaking that is very labor intensive. I am asking everyone that is reading this newsletter to consider attending one of our monthly Board Meetings, held the first Wednesday of each month, to get a sense of what we do. We would like to count on you or someone you may know to be part of this great team. We ask you to please give this some serious thought.

**MARKETING**

**Kathy Weberg**

Perhaps many of you have “taken the tour” of the Messer/Mayer Mill and the miller's house. How did you like it? Of course, RHS hopes the answer is “wonderful.” If that isn't the case, be sure to let someone know what your concerns might be so improvements can be made.

Recently a lovely group of ladies from the Brookfield area “took the tour” by special request. They have been touring historic places for 43, yes 43, years. I will share a portion of the note that RHS received: “We want to thank you SO MUCH for the very marvelous tours. We talked about (it) at length over lunch at the Sawmill. We were amazed at the excellent restoration of the house, the extensive information given us by the docents (and their enthusiasm), and the number of items you had accumulated that were original to the house! The grist mill also surprised us at its completeness and condition. The docent had SO much knowledge! I couldn't get over how automated it was and how much engineering knowledge they had in 1871! Our drive out past the other buildings really topped off our wonderful day.” (Log buildings, sugar shack and granary) (Capitalization and underlining as written in the note.) These ladies expressed to us that this was the best tour they have taken in their 43 years of touring.

Here's the pitch: you, too, can be a part of this marvelous experience. Tour guides are always needed. Contact chairpersons of the House or Mill Committees or any board member to be a part of this outstanding group. And just so you know, tours can be scheduled just about any time by special request. Again contact any board member or committee chair.

**MEMBERSHIP**

**Judy Lehman**

RHS is a great organization - which means YOU EACH are wonderful! We can all look forward to interesting projects, fun events, comfortable gatherings, insightful presentations, yummy food and, of course, hard work - to get our mill grinding!

You all should have received your membership renewals for 2016. We hope you already have returned your form or will do so soon. We thank you again for all your support!

**MILL HOUSE**

**Clara Birkel/Cindy Schmechel**

**MAKING MEMORIES AT THE MILL HOUSE** – Linda Derrick

Christmas at the Mill House is an open house, free to the community and held each December in conjunction with Christmas in Richfield. Young and old from all over the area come to the Richfield Historical Park to experience an old fashioned Christmas. Like all the events at RHS, it takes a team of many to put this together. Thanks to our volunteers.

Here are some of the memories from this year's Christmas at the Mill House:

Volunteers pose in front of the tree after spending several hours putting up vintage decorations inside and outside. The Mill House is decorated the week before the event.





**Top Row:**

**Left:** Ready for visitors, the table is full of homemade cookies, many from old family recipes. The cider is hot, bread bakes in the wood stove and the aroma fills the air.

**Right:** Visitors are greeted on the porch as they step into the sights, sounds and smells of long ago.

**Middle Row:**

**Left:** The sweet sounds of music comes from the mandolin players seated in the parlor.

**Right:** The day wouldn't be complete without Christmas carols.

**Bottom Row:**

**Left:** Finding the pickle ornament is an old German custom that this little girl just experienced. Find the pickle hanging on the tree, and you get a prize.



**MILL RESTORATION**

**“Buzz Carr**

The historical significance of this small milling business cannot be overstated. It presented a focal point for the social life of the agricultural community that it served. Farmers came to the mill to get their grain ground but visited with their neighbors while they were waiting. Farm life was arduous and essentially lonely due to the long hours and distance between neighbors. A visit to the mill presented an opportunity to take a break and enjoy some conversation.

The fact that George Mayer chose not to dismantle the Messer/Mayer Mill, as was common when these sort of operations were shut down, means that we now have a wonderful opportunity to view all of the machinery as it was when the Mill was running. Three generations of milling technology, dating from early stone grinding to the modern roller mill, three generations of power from the early use of water to modern electricity are all represented in this small building. The Messer/Mayer Mill just happened to be built and operated when all these changes in technology were occurring. By some wonderful happenstance, George Mayer chose not to dismantle the Mill and its machinery, and it sustained itself just long enough for the Town of Richfield to save it in 1998. The result of all these random events is why we can today witness the rare opportunity to see, not a simulation, but the real means by which some of our early Wisconsin pioneers worked and prospered.

**MUSEUM**

**Jean Happel/Norb Berres**

We have some kerosene lanterns on display in our various buildings. Their origin began in 1846 when Abraham Geser who had developed and patented a process for the manufacture of kerosene substituted it as fuel instead of whale oil in lanterns. He found it gave off a much brighter light. Both the oil and kerosene lanterns have a metal or glass base which holds the fuel. On top sits the mantel or wick with a glass chimney that protects the flame from the wind. The metal ones have a bail wire attached so they can be carried or hung, and the glass ones have a glass handle for carrying.

Throughout the ages different methods were used to generate light. The caveman soaked moss in animal fat. During the Iron Age oil lamps and candles were used. In the 1700s, whale oil burning lanterns were used. The Chinese have used paper lanterns with a candle inside for centuries. Today our light source is provided by electricity and batteries using various mediums. Quite an advancement wouldn't you say?



**PROJECT COORDINATOR**

**Del Schmechel**

Having completed the wall on the east side of the Mill, it needed to be topped off with a railing to conform to the Village codes.

Fortunately we received a wonderful donation of an early iron railing which just fit the bill. Doesn't it look beautiful!



**SOCIETY WINTER/SPRING PROGRAMS** - Richfield Village Hall – 7:00 p.m. all except January  
(Programs are open to the public at no charge and all are welcome!)

“1947 Snowstorm” - January 28, 2016 – Richfield Fire House, 2008 State Rd. 175, Richfield – Richard Pfeiffer  
“Milwaukee’s Founding Fathers” – February 25, 2016 – Richfield Village Hall – Jan Van Rens  
“New Gardens at Old World Wisconsin” – March 24, 2016 – Richfield Village Hall – Marcia Carmichael  
“Mary Todd Lincoln’s Genealogical Tree” – April 28, 2016 – Richfield Village Hall – Jenna Theissen  
“Whispers and Shadows” – May 26, 2016 – Richfield Village Hall - Jerry Apps

**SOCIETY COMING EVENTS** - Richfield Historical Park – all except February event  
Check our website ([richfieldhistoricalsociety.org](http://richfieldhistoricalsociety.org)) for information

Antique Appraisal & Chili Lunch – February 21, 2016 – Richfield Fire House, 2008 State Rd. 175, Richfield  
Maple Syrup Family Day – March 26, 2016 – Richfield Historical Park  
Art at the Mill – July 23, 2016 – Richfield Historical Park  
18<sup>th</sup> Annual Thresheree – September 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016 – Richfield Historical Park

**MILL HOUSE BOOK CLUB** - Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday every month at 1:00 p.m. at the Java Dancer’s on  
the corner of Hubertus Rd. and State Highway 175. All are welcome

January 20, 2016 – “The House on Mango Street” by Sandra Cisneros  
February 17, 2016 – “Dead Wake” by Erik Larson  
March 16, 2016 – “Sweetland” by Michael Crummey  
April 20, 2016 – “The Life We Bury” by Allen Eskens  
May 18, 2016 – “When I Found You” by Catherine Ryan Hyde

## 2015 Sponsors & Donors

Sponsors/contributors for our events and In Kind donors are a very important and appreciated element of the operation of the Richfield Historical Society. The support of these contributors enables the Society to continue the projects which preserve the history of the Village of Richfield and share it with current and future generations. A Thank You to all the many businesses that have purchased ads for our 2015 Events Program and everyone who has donated to the Messer/Mayer Mill Restoration Fund.

### Wheat (\$500 or more)

Dr. Don and Janis Crego (Thresheree)  
Dehumidifier Corporation of America (Art Fair)  
E. H. Wolf & Sons, Inc. (Thresheree)  
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Tom Daniels (Thresheree)  
Wissota Sand and Gravel, Co. (Thresheree)

### Rye (\$499-\$250)

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Richfield Service (Vintage Base Ball & Car Show)

### Oats (\$249-\$100)

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Gehring Sales & Service, Inc. (Thresheree)  
Horsch & Miller Plumbing and Heating (Thresheree)  
Integrated Management and Accounting (Thresheree)  
Klug’s Photo World (Membership Brochure)  
Landmark Credit Union (Thresheree)  
United Cooperative (Thresheree)  
Waddell & Reed –The Heimerman Team (Art Fair)

### Companies~Donate for Volunteer Hours/Match Donations

3M  
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### In Kind Donations

Conley Media (Advertising – All Events)  
County Wide Extinguisher (Fire Extinguishers-Thresheree)  
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Duquaine Concrete & Masonry (Mill Retaining Wall)  
Graphic Edge (Printing)  
Hallman Lindsay (Paint for Mill House)  
Heartland Farms (Potatoes-Thresheree)  
Karrell Excavating (Gravel)  
Manitou Americas (Tent-Thresheree)  
Chris & Dorothy Marks (Laying Recognition Bricks)  
Museum of Wisconsin Art (Art Fair)  
No Mosquitoes For You (Art Fair & Vintage Base Ball & Car Show)  
Obermeyer’s “41” Auto Body (Plaques for Car Show)  
Richfield Service (Give-a ways for Car Show)  
Waste Management (Trash Removal)  
Wissota Sand & Gravel (Gravel-Lillicrapp House Parking Lot & Blacksmith Shop)  
Wolf Bros. Fuel, Inc. (LP Gas)













