



Richfield Historical Society
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Lake Five Hotel

LAKE FIVE – Aeron Smith

In the Village of Richfield, the lakes include Amy Belle, Bark Lake, Friess, Lake Five and Mud Lake. The majority of Lake Five is located in the southern portion of the village which is located in Washington County. A small amount of shoreline on the southern edge of the lake is located in the Town of Lisbon in Waukesha County. There are approximately 55 lake-frontage owners.

Lake Five is known as a "seepage" lake. A seepage lake has no inlet or outlet. Its source of water is from precipitation and groundwater. The lake is spring fed. Since there is no inlet or outlet, water levels may fluctuate. Its size is about 102 acres and has a maximum depth of about 23 feet.

Lake Five is without public access except through a boat rental (location N95 W26498 Cty Q.) A voluntary Lake Five Advancement Association was established in the 1930s and was incorporated as a non-profit organization on September 15, 1942 and is still active today.

Many enjoyable summer activities take place on Lake Five, such as swimming, canoeing, kayaking, boating, skiing, and fishing. The lake contains bass, northern pike, perch, walleyes, and pan fish. At times, loons, swans, and cranes make an appearance on the lake. On several occasions even a bald eagle has been sighted. Winter activities include ice fishing, snowmobiling, skating and cross country skiing.

Living On Lake Five (Early Years to Present)

In the early 1900s, spring through fall, Lake Five became a weekend and vacationing spot. People from Milwaukee and Chicago came by train to Colgate. While others made the entire trip by horse and wagon (loaded with their luggage and essential supplies). From the Colgate train station to Lake Five was about three (3) miles. Some of the younger generation walked, while others obtained a ride from local farmers in their horse and wagon. A fee was sometimes charged for this service.

Once at Lake Five, one of the first stops was the Lake Five Hotel (established 1876 as a home). A 1915 plat book lists the Koch brothers as owners of the Lake Five Hotel and Saloon in Colgate. The Lake Five Hotel's upper level had rooms for lodging on the east side and on the west side had a hall. Through the years, the hotel / tavern remained open for business and was the center of much activity in the Lake Five community. In later years, the hotel / tavern was known as the "Roadside." Today, the "Roadside" is known as "Uncle Johnnies."

In the early years when the travelers or owners finally arrived at their cottages, sometimes they encountered gypsies on their properties. The Lake Five location provided water and food which made a desirable campsite for them. If this occurrence happened, the property owners would ask them to leave.

As not all cottage owners had their own well pumps, many rowed across the lake to a spring house which was located on the Pfister / Vogel property on the north shore of the lake.

In the winter, blocks of ice were cut from frozen Lake Five and were then packed in straw, in a windowless structure known as an ice house. One such ice house was located behind the Lake Five Hotel. The ice was sold to neighbors as needed throughout the year. Some of these ice houses later became cottages on the lake.

Shorelines began being developed and cottages built before World War I. Some of the names of the early families at Lake Five include: Wiethaup (1895), Ripple, Schroeder, Lechner, Hesse, Rintelmann, Roloff, Bischoff, Flynn, and Staus. Some of these homes are still standing today.

Travel to Lake Five became a little easier when automobiles came about; road improvements helped travel to the lake. However, getting to the lake in winter still proved difficult, and in 1938, County Line Q was black topped, then Highway J (now highway 164) was next. Gasoline rationing also changed travel to the lake for some summer residents. Commutes were limited.

There were several grocery stores in the Lake Five area. The earliest location was in downtown Colgate. The owner of the store was Frank E. Stirn. It was known as the Stirn Brothers General Merchandise Store (1904.) Another grocery store was located on Plat Rd. To get to the Plat grocery store, people would row across Lake Five to the spring house. Then they would take a trail through Pfister and Vogel's woods to the store.

The younger generation chose to hike all the way. A third store was located on highway Q (address N95 W26567) across from the lake. This store was originally a log cabin. The store was open from the mid-1940s. It had several owners down through the years. The last owner bought the store in 1973 and renamed it "The Little Store." Today it is no longer in business. Farmers in the area also sold their products to the people around the lake.

Pfister / Vogel Estate

The entire north side of Lake Five, in Washington County, was the 1912 Charles Pfister estate. The approximately 150 acre retreat was called "Camp Rest." A mission-style mansion was built on the property. The mansion was primarily used for Pfister's many guests. Charles Pfister, himself, preferred to sleep in a simple canvas structure on the grounds. In April 1927, he suffered a stroke and died in Milwaukee on November 12, 1927.

The estate was then acquired by Charles P. Vogel (a nephew of Pfister). The Vogel estate was renamed "Carleen" after his daughter. Charles P. Vogel died on September 22, 1959. He was survived by his wife Eileen and two children, Philip and Carleen. Eventually Eileen gave the estate to Marquette / Jesuits with a stipulation that she would keep the house on the property once used by her chauffeur. Marquette / Jesuits still own the property today.

References:

"Richfield Remembers the Past," Richfield Historical Society	Karleen Kraus
"Lake Five Memories," Bea Hassler	UW Extension: Wisconsin Lakes
Carleen Vogel Obituary (May 2012)	1940 Census
	Wikipedia

PRESIDENT

Frank "Buzz" Carr

Hello to all of you history enthusiasts out there. I am happy to report that the Richfield Historical Society is doing well. Our many volunteers remain enthusiastic and active, and the Historical Park and buildings are in great shape.

We dedicated the Lillicrapp House at the Threshere in September; and, after several years of work, it is now ready to be our headquarters. We have a great volunteer in Aeron Smith who will be heading the new Lillicrapp House Committee, and she has many ideas about how to get the best use out of the house for RHS. We have had several meetings of different committees at the house. It is working out well.

Del Schmechel has agreed to be our new Projects Committee/Pioneer Village Chair; and, therefore, in accordance with the bylaws, he is now a member of the RHS Board of Directors. Del has been a member of the Thursday work crew for some time and is great at getting things done. He will be a great asset on the Board.

Fred Kegel has decided to leave the RHS Board of Directors at the expiration of his term at the end of this year. Fred has been a dedicated board member and has specialized in genealogical studies. We thank Fred for his many contributions. He will continue to work on RHS activities in the future as an active volunteer.

Another new director is Jane Kyle. She and her husband Ed have been busy volunteers for some time doing various things including running the silent auction at the Threshere. Jane has agreed to

be our new Recording Secretary. Our prior Recording Secretary, Dawn Mueller, is moving to Corresponding Secretary. Dawn has done a great job keeping a record of board meetings and general meetings, and we are delighted that she will remain on the board.

Finally, we are pleased that Diane Pedersen has agreed to join the RHS Board of Directors. Diane has a long history of being involved with Richfield in various volunteer activities and was Town Board President when the Town and Village merged and became the enlarged Village of Richfield. She brings a wealth of experience that will serve our society well.

RHS has a new building project on the horizon. We have accumulated the materials to build a post and beam building over the past few years, and we have decided to use the materials to build a blacksmith shop. We are in the process of getting the approval of the Village of Richfield for the building which we hope to construct near the Pioneer Village area. Practically everything that we need has or will be donated. So we can construct the building using our great volunteers with very little out of pocket cost. If all goes well, we hope to have this project done during the summer of 2015. We think this will be a nice addition to the Historical Park since all villages in the old days had some form of a blacksmith shop. We will be building it with salvaged materials, so it will give the appearance of an old structure and, therefore, fit appropriately into the Park.

Do not be concerned that this project will detract us from our primary goal of restoring the Mill. While we raise the funds to rebuild the Mill foundation, we are on hold with doing much with the Mill. Therefore, the blacksmith shop is a good interim project that will add value to the Park until we can do more with the Mill.

Come and visit the Park and come to our monthly meetings. The speakers that Marge Holzbog finds are always interesting, and the meetings bring you up to date on the activities of RHS. I wish you all a great Holiday season and Happy New Year.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Sharon Lofy

The dates for our 2015 Education Activity Days are Tuesday, May 12 and Thursday, May 21. Area students, teachers and volunteers experience a fun way to learn about their past. Memories are shared and made a part of their lives.

Our four Traveling Trunks are being dusted off to make them ready for 2015. Letters are being sent to Senior Centers for setting a viewing date for the new year (January - April).

The 16th Annual Thresheree ran into a few showers. Sunday the Tractor Parade was cancelled because of weather conditions. But, a few showers did not keep families from coming and enjoying all that there was to see and do.

To some the Thresheree seems to appear for two days and then disappear. Wouldn't that be wonderful to have a great event with NO WORK !! It takes several days for setup and take down. Without the dedicated help of the Thursday Crew and all our great volunteers (RHS members, family, friends, neighbors, other organizations), we couldn't begin to have our many events. A BIG THANKS TO ALL OF YOU !!

Our Thresheree Pot Luck Wrap-Up Meeting was well attended. The food was delicious as always. Comments were shared to help make our 2015 event successful and enjoyable for all.

Anyone interested in attending our Education Meeting, give me a call. (262-297-1546). Also, if you would like to volunteer, have special interests or questions about volunteering, let me know.

EVENTS COMMITTEE

Connie Thoma

The next event for the Richfield Historical Society will be the Antique Appraisal Fair and Chili Lunch. It will be held on February 15, 2015 at the Richfield Fire Department - 2008 N. Hwy 175 in Richfield from 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM. There is no admission fee. Appraisals are \$5.00 per item. (No appraisals from photos unless the item is too large to convey.) There will be two general appraisers, one coin, jewelry, gold and silver appraiser, one civil war & WWI appraiser and one appraiser for Native American items and fossils.

If you have ever wondered if that old item that Dear Aunt Ellie left you is worth anything, now is the time to check it out. Also clean out your attics and/or basements and look for old items that may have been forgotten. One never knows what treasures may be hiding there. Spread the word to neighbors and friends to do the same. Let's make this year our best year yet.

Chili is \$6.00 (including one refill but not for take-out) with bread and all the fixings plus brownies or bars. Beverages are available for \$1.00. Take-outs are available.

If you love to cook or have a special recipe for Chili, we could use you. By donating one gallon of Chili you will be helping to raise funds for the Richfield Historical Society. We combine all the cooked Chili to make a delicious bowl of soup. Please contact me, Connie Thoma, at 262-628-3505 for more information.

HOUSE COMMITTEE

Clara Birkel/Cindy Schmechel

Local Vets Honored in Military Display at Threshere – Linda Derrick

Each year for the Threshere the Mill House features a special display from our museum collection, and this year we honored three local veterans. Military clothing, photos and memorabilia belonging to these individuals from WW I and WW II were on display. Two of these vets, Edwin Mayer and Vernon Mayer, both grew up in the Mill House and the third vet, Marvin Timm, married Beulah Mayer. Here is a brief recap of their histories.

Edwin Jacob Mayer – The son of C. W. and Mary Kurtz Mayer (owners and operators of the Grist Mill). He entered the U. S. Army in WW I on July 23, 1918 and took his basic training at Camp Zachary Taylor in Louisville, Kentucky.

From Louisville, he went to Camp McClellan in Anniston, Alabama. While there, he contracted the flu and was so ill that he was put on the infirmary porch for dead. When someone noticed movement, he was returned inside and survived.

He worked as a cook in the Army until his honorable discharge on January 3, 1919. Returning home, he bought a farm in the town of Erin and married Ruth Ebling of Richfield on June 20, 1920. They lived there the rest of their lives. Edwin died in 1964.

Vernon Mayer – The son of George and Martha Mayer (second-generation owners and operators of the Grist Mill). Vernon joined the Navy in 1942 during WW II. He trained at Great Lakes before locating at Norman, Oklahoma Naval Air Station. He was later transferred to Jacksonville, Florida’s Naval Air Station for the remainder of the war and honorably discharged in 1945.

Vernon met and married Montre Harper in Florida before moving back to the farm in Richfield in 1946. They later bought a home in Hartford where they lived for the next 20 years. During this time, he worked for the West Bend Aluminum Company. The company transferred him back to Florida where they lived until his death in 1993.

Marvin L. Timm – The son of Leonard and Meta Timm of Colgate, was a Corporal in the 40th Engineers Combat Regiment in WW II. He entered the service in 1942 and was stationed in four U.S. camps before going overseas in June of 1943. He took part in the invasion in Sicily, went to Italy and then France. He was wounded in an explosion while helping other injured soldiers resulting in the loss of his right eye. In 1944, he received the Purple Heart, good conduct ribbons and three battle participation stars.

He was honorably discharged in 1945 after almost three years of service. In all the time he served, he had not returned home on leave. In 1946, he married Beulah Mayer, daughter of Edwin and Ruth Ebling Mayer. Beulah was a teacher at Friess Lake School. Marvin died in 1988.



Mayer/Timm Family



Bob and Carol Woods

Mayer Family Furniture Returns – Linda Derrick

On a Fall day in October 2014, a moving truck pulled up to the Mill House and furniture that was once part of the house many years ago was unloaded and brought back to its original location in the house.

The love seat, settee, chairs, rocker and Edison Victrola that once belonged to C. W. Mayer and his family were returned to the Parlor. The butter churn that Carol Woods used as a child went back in the utility room. A fainting couch now graces the sitting room. George and Martha’s bedroom set was carried up the stairs to the bedroom they once occupied. Even the quilt that they used and the pillows came back still stuffed with down from the chickens that once wandered the family farm.

These are just a few of the items Carol and Bob Woods have donated back to the Mill House. Carol is the daughter of George Mayer, and she has fond memories of growing up at the Mill House. When she and her brother Vernon sold the property in the 1970s, they divided the furniture between themselves. Vernon and his wife Montre moved their items to Florida where they lived. Vernon died in 1993 and Montre passed away this past summer. Carol and Bob were instrumental in arranging that the furniture and a number of framed family photos were donated to RHS and returned to the Mill House this past Fall.

We are grateful to Carol and Bob for this generous donation and excited to add these items to all the other family items they have already so graciously donated at an earlier time. The next time you are attending an event at the Richfield Historical Park, stop in to tour the house and see what's new.



C. W. Mayer Parlor Furniture
Clock made by Harry Niemann



Carol Woods



Parlor Recollections – Carol Woods

The Parlor was used for special occasions such as wedding entertainment, birthdays, anniversaries, Christmas, and funerals.

When used for funerals, the deceased would lie in state before the funeral for visitation of family and friends. After the church burial service, it was the place where mourners, both family and friends, would come together.

When used for Christmas celebrations, the tree was always placed in the corner nearest the door. Grandma Mary was the tree trimmer, and she allowed no one to help and no one in the parlor until Christmas. Being a typical child who couldn't wait that long, I would come home from school; and, if no one was around, would peek through the double door keyhole which was always kept locked at that time of the year. At some time, unknown to me, I was spotted. And, from that time on the keyhole was stuffed with paper.

CHRISTMAS AT THE MILL HOUSE - Linda Derrick

It was December 6th, 2014, but the Mill House looked more like a turn-of-the-century photo out of "Vogue Magazine." A sleigh full of brightly wrapped presents sat in the yard waiting for Santa and his reindeer. Visitors were greeted with vintage German-style decorations, the aroma of baking bread, a table full of Christmas cookies and the sweet sounds of vintage strings playing Christmas Carols. Children delighted in finding the pickle ornament on the tree; and "in the blink of an eye," another successful event enjoyed by many at the Richfield Historical Park was over.



Mill House Parlor Christmas Tree



Mill House Entry



Finding the Pickle



**House Committee Chairmen
Cindy Schmechel & Clara Birkel**

LIBRARY COMMITTEE

Marge Holzbog

The Legend of the Christmas Tree – Clement Clark Moore (1779 – 1863) who wrote the famous poem “A Visit from St. Nicolas” in this tale, generosity and goodwill, bring forth a Christmas miracle.

Few have heard or read the story that is told to German children respecting the origins of this custom. The story is called "The Little Stranger." - In a small, cottage on the borders of a forest lived a poor laborer with his wife and two children, a boy, Valentine, and a girl Mary. They were good children and a comfort to their parents.

One snowy winter evening there was a gentle tap at the window. A childish voice cried; "Oh, let me in, pray. I am a poor child with nothing to eat and no home to go to." Valentine and Mary jumped up and ran to open the door saying: "Come in poor little child! We have not much to give you, but what we have we will share with you." The children gave him the best they had to eat, and then allowed he could sleep on their bench for one night. The little stranger child said: "Thank God for your kindness to me."

Next morning in the east there was a streak of rosy dawn, and then there came a light tap at the door. There stood the stranger-child in a golden dress saying: "I am the child who wanders through the world bringing peace and happiness to good children. Because you took me in and cared for me, you shall have my blessing for what you have done."

A fir tree grew near the house; and from this he broke a twig and planted it in the ground saying: "This twig shall become a tree, and shall bring forth fruit year by year for you." No sooner had the child vanished than the fir branch grew and became a Christmas tree, and on its branches hung golden apples and silver nuts every Christmastide. And such is the story told to German children concerning their beautiful Christmas tree.

LILLICRAPP HOMESTEAD COMMITTEE

Aerona Smith

A special thank you to all who made the opening and dedication of the Lillicrapp House/Welcome Center a success at the 2014 Threshere event.

Our dedication, hosted by RHS President "Buzz" Carr, was very special with the attendance of 92 year old Betty Kindem who travelled to be with us from Seattle, Washington. Betty was the last resident to live in the house at its original location on Amy Belle Lake. It was indeed an honor to have her with us, and her remarks at the dedication served as an inspiration to those in attendance. We were saddened that the donor of the house, Carolyn Korona, could not be with us for this special occasion.

Those in attendance had access to the home via our handicap ramp entering the original summer kitchen where the five lakes in the Village of Richfield were featured. An assortment of goodies were available on the vintage round table beneath a lovely historic chandelier original to the house. In the parlor, one wall featured an extensive camera collection, and on the opposite wall RHS member, Linda Derrick, had a display of her original art dealing with a variety of Mill and



Betty Kindem



Linda Derrick

Historic Park subjects. Lynne Nelson demonstrated weaving on her grandmother's loom, and various antique objects loaned to RHS by myself were on display. The long hallway opposite the beautiful walnut stair leading to the second floor had an informational display regarding each family that had lived in the house over the years. It was a wonderful day.

Assuming the role of chair-person is a busy and challenging task. There is much to be done to develop new and fresh displays in the coming year. I am happy, therefore, to announce my new committee members; Karleen Kraus, Norb Berres, Ruth Schneider, and Marge Holzbog. But, we are always looking for volunteers to join us. No job is considered too small. If interested, please call; Aeron Smith (262-628-9909.) The Committee and I are looking forward to having you all visit us at the Lillicrapp House/Welcome Center in 2015.

LONG RANGE PLANNING

Jim Metzger

Financial Development – Norm Grier

“Over and over I marvel at the blessings of my life.

Each year has grown better than the last.” — Lawrence Welk

You may remember Frank Sinatra singing “It Was a Very Good Year.” Well, for RHS it was! Our events went well, some setting attendance records, which helped increase the balances in our bank accounts while providing quality family entertainment and an enhanced understanding of our community and appreciation for those who have lived here.

We’ve been pleased to welcome new members and friends this past year. RHS enjoys a reputation as one of the most active local historical societies in the state. Our monthly meetings bring wide ranging quality presentations. If you’ve not attended a Thursday general meeting recently, you really should make an effort to add the next one to your family calendar.

Our strength lies with our members, friends, volunteers and board. Sometimes stressed by the time required to accomplish our goals, dedicated RHS volunteers pause and then take on the next task. RHS really means it when asking if you would please step up and join in the fun. It is fun most of the time, and you get a chance to meet and work with genuinely fine folks. We encourage youth who may seek community volunteer activities to check out RHS opportunities, many are available during our events at the Richfield Historic Park.

Less visible, may be the support we’ve received from businesses and other organizations and our local government – staff and citizens alike. This support comes in a great many ways; from gifts and deep discounts on materials -- like paint and gravel, on services -- like layout and printing and historic items as the gift of the original furniture from the Mill House. We’ve received professional advice as how to best accomplish a task whether fundraising or foundation rebuilding and a whole lot more

Milestones in 2014 included:

- The Lillicrapp House dedication during the 16th annual Thresheree at the RHS Visitor Center. This event was the culmination of extensive rehab work to both the exterior and interior of the house.
- The parking lot at the Lillicrapp House will be completed before our 2015 events enhancing access to this new asset.
- Planning is underway for the construction of a blacksmith shop in the area near the log buildings.

- **Mill Foundation -- completion of Phase One and start on the second of the three phase restoration project.**
- **Master Plan – was presented to the Village outlining our enhancements at the Richfield Historic Park.**

While making plans for the many 2015 events, RHS has NOT forgotten our primary task, the completion of the “Get It Grinding” capital campaign. As we move beyond the first phase of restoration and celebrate the success of raising almost \$540,000 to date, we realize that it is crucial to raise the remaining \$300,000 to complete the job. Yes, that is a significant sum. By best estimates, we must have in hand those additional dollars in order to proceed with the bids for the final phase.

While our efforts are being doubled to find significant large gifts, we know that the final success will depend upon RHS members, friends and others interested in our Richfield community. If you have not yet participated in this most important campaign, please give serious consideration of making a financial contribution to it. If you have already contributed in the past three or four years, thank you -- and please consider making another contribution to help meet our remaining \$300,000 goal.

With our RHS family sharing this newsletter, perhaps each of us may take a moment to pause and reflect on the gifts that grace our lives and how fortunate we are to have each other. We remember those who have departed – and welcome new faces who have grown our family. In this season, we hope that you too have enjoyed the holidays and eagerly anticipate an even better 2015.

Lastly, Richfield Historical Society is extremely grateful to Jim and Kristen Hamel for their substantial donation to the capital campaign. Their contribution will move us closer to the "goal posts" of repairing the mill foundation. It's the generosity of the people that have donated over the years at whatever level that have made the Richfield Historical Park what it is today. Thank you all.

The Richfield Historical Society also thanks the North Washington County chapter of Thrivent Financial for Lutherans for its generous donation of \$800. This gift was given as a partial match to the proceeds from the Silent Auction at September's Threshere and will be used toward the Mill Foundation Restoration Project. RHS appreciates how members of this Thrivent chapter have come together to help their greater community in general and RHS in particular. Hats off to you, Thrivent members!

How Do You Want to be Remembered? – Jeanne Engle

How many times have you said with pride that you were from Richfield? Think of the lakes and rivers that run through the village – the scenic beauty we have in our backyards. Think of how our ancestors settled this area and built a community here in our midst. Think of how our unique history is preserved and shared by the Richfield Historical Society. Think of what a loss it would be if RHS weren't here to safeguard our local stories and artifacts. Think of how you can add to our community's legacy by leaving a gift to RHS as part of your will or estate.

A will allows you to securely support your family's well-being along with your favorite charities. It isn't difficult to draw up a will or trust. Generally you need the help of an attorney. But first, take the time to decide your personal objectives and determine who should receive your assets after you are gone. Charitable bequests can be from cash assets such as bank accounts, stocks, bonds,

realestate, or other property.

We understand that loved ones are likely to be named as first recipients of your estate. But many people also choose to remember and support worthy causes they believe in and respect. We trust RHS will be one of those causes for you. Just let your attorney know that you would like to leave a bequest to RHS. Bequests can be general (a sum of money to be used for RHS's general purposes); specific (a sum of money to be used for a specific purpose, e.g., artifact restoration); residuary (RHS receives the residue portion of assets after other terms of your will have been satisfied); or contingency (a portion of the estate is left to RHS if your named beneficiary does not survive you). Be sure you give your attorney our legal name – Richfield Historical Society, Inc., PO Box 268, Richfield WI 53076 – and the federal tax ID number of 31-158978.

MARKETING COMMITTEE

Kathy Weberg

“I've lived in Richfield for twenty years, and I never knew this park was here.” Do you have any idea how many times Richfield Historical Society members have heard that? Too many to count! Your Public Relations chairperson, along with others who felt the same way, made the decision that RHS definitely needs to “up” our outreach efforts with regard to our events, the beautiful Historical Park and the Society in general.

So a committee has been formed consisting of Diane Pederson, Lois Hessenauer, Norm Grier, Buzz and Mary Beth Carr, Nancy Watson-Bocher and myself to evaluate all of our marketing and public relations activity, publicity and advertising. We're finding this involves many facets from our website to newspapers to radio and TV to social media and then some. It is a work in progress that we've just begun. So, if anyone has experience in this area, we'd love to have your help and support. Send me an email: kathyweberg@yahoo.com

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Judy Lehman

As 2014 winds down and 2015 lies ahead, crisp and beckoning, make one of the first things you do is to commit to the Richfield Historical Society.

Enjoy the friendships, the projects, the figuring out how things work, how things were, and what we should and should not have as our priorities for the future.

Thank you if you are a life-long member of the Richfield Historical Society! Thank you if you have already renewed your yearly membership! And thank you if you are about to renew your membership for 2015! We are a wonderful organization, serving an important function for Richfield and the surrounding community - preserving and sharing the past to help build a caring future. So hope to see you at the next General Meeting where I am hoping I can report all membership renewals are completed.

MILL RESTORATION COMMITTEE

“Buzz” Carr

Things have been a bit quiet at the Mill recently as we continue to raise funds for the foundation restoration through the capital campaign. Most of you know that we rebuilt about two thirds of the foundation in the summer of 2013 with the funds that we had raised to that time. Prior to that reconstruction, we had stabilized the foundation with steel supporting structures so that we could

conduct tours of the mill in safety. We recently received permission from the Village Engineer to remove some of those support structures so now we can start to reinstall some of the operating machinery in the mill basement. This equipment was removed to make room to do the foundation repair.

We have also recently had an architect experienced in stone foundation repair inspect the foundation so that he can give us suggestions about the most efficient and economical method to approach the remaining repairs. He is reviewing the drawings that were prepared in the past and will be reporting his suggestions in the near future.

It is important for everyone to realize that “Getting the Mill Grinding” is still our first priority in the Park. Our Capital Campaign Committee is actively engaged in fund raising, and we have been very fortunate in receiving significant donations. The goal is still large, however, so we ask all of you to be generous with giving and also forward any ideas you have to help RHS in this important task.

MUSEUM COMMITTEE

Jean Happel/Norb Berres

The camera collection displayed in the Lillicrapp House represents a large segment of the history of photography. Our 1880s 5” x 8” view camera was not much advanced from the earliest cameras of the 1820s. The chemistry had gone through Daguerrotype, tin type and finally to silver emulsions. Taking a picture in the early days was primitive and slow and required a tripod. By adjusting the leather bellows, the image was brought into focus, upside down, on a ground glass. The photographer had to cover the camera back and his head with a dark cloth to see the image. Depth of field and f-stop was set by rotating a disc with progressively smaller openings, each a fraction of the lens focal length. There was no shutter. So, a lens cap sealed out the light while the glass plate holder was inserted into the camera back. The cap was then removed, and the estimated exposure time was counted down in seconds. The glass plate became the negative, and a print was made from it. Storage for glass plate negatives was hazardous and bulky. So, most often they were stripped and recoated and used again. And, they were easily broken. So few survive today. Our camera has its own history story as it was owned by a friend of Thomas Edison. Think of the glass plate history lost there.

In 1889, George Eastman introduced roll film, and Kodak was born. Cameras became portable, plentiful and far easier to use. By the 1930s, they were simplified in design, molded in plastic and sold for as little as \$1.00 – the Baby Brownie. Everyone had one. We have two in our collection.

The Germans packaged short lengths of 35mm movie film in small cartridges and combined that with fine multi-element lenses and rangefinders to bring a whole new type of camera to market. The East Germans introduced the single lens reflex. The Japanese, as they often did then, were quick to copy that idea and made them cheaper. Before long, they realized they could make them better, AND cheaper. Through the 60s, 70s and 80s, cameras developed into fine instruments, ever faster and easier to use. We have many great examples of these in our collection.

In the 90s, Kodak, yes Kodak, invented the digital technology which ironically ruined their film industry and, failing to lead with camera design, put them into bankruptcy.

Today, although there are many fine digital cameras on the market, most photos are taken with cell phones or I-pads and are rarely printed. Sadly, we risk losing our history as technology advances and obsoletes our photo treasures. So, back ‘em up and print ‘em out.

PROJECT/VILLAGE HOMESTEAD COORDINATOR

Del Schmechel

Maple syrup, nature’s gift. . . Spring is a long way off but many of us are already planning for next season’s maple syrup season. Planning starts by making sure you have all the necessary consumables on hand. Those would be bottles, caps, labels, sap bags and, of course, a large supply of wood to keep the fire burning. Then, we have to wait for the right combination of freezing nights and warm days that causes the sap to flow.

We process our sap into syrup, but it is also possible to make maple sugar with a little more time and heat. Syrup is made by reducing the amount of water in the sap, and this can be done several ways. We boil the sap over a wood fire, but it can also be done through evaporation or allowing the sap to form ice then removing this ice. On average 40 gallons of sap will result in 1 gallon of syrup.

Early settlers would drink the sap straight from the tree as a refreshing drink. The work of clearing land and working the fields wouldn’t be possible without a ready supply of liquid to drink. You can think of sap as the first energy drink. There was a time when maple sugar was promoted as an alternative to cane sugar that required slave labor to harvest and process. Even now, how many of us really understand the labor required to provide the variety of goods at our supermarkets? Although many tried large scale production of maple sugar, it never became profitable and was eventually replaced by the sugar beet.

We are always happy to receive visitors at our sugar shack. We work from 8am to 5pm when the sap is flowing. This goes on 7 days a week until the trees tell us it’s time to stop. Sap should be clear like water and turns yellow when it’s time to end the season. We would enjoy showing you first-hand the workings at our sugar shack. Or better still, visit us on Family Maple Syrup Day, March 28th.

SITES COMMITTEE

Herb Lofy

As we face another year end, I would like to recognize Christopher Marks for the beautiful paved walkway to the RHS Visitors Center (Lillicrapp house). Chris and I designed and installed the walkway and stairs leading to the east door of the house. Sharon and I donated the US flag and flagpole located in the planter-giving a patriotic message in the Park. (The flag was the idea of the late Bob Bayer who mentioned it at a Sites Committee meeting.) Chris donated his time and labor which would have amounted to about \$9600 at the going rate. This included 265 man hours and 35 machine hours (my skid loader). Not included were the several loads of donated traffic bond from Bill Wetterau and the loading and trucking by Jerome Hansen and myself.

The Lillicrapp House is designated to eventually become the donor recognition area in the Historical Park. At the time of this writing, we are waiting to complete the parking lot south of the house. Once everything is done, visitors will easily recognize the RHS Visitors Center and the role it plays making trips to the park more enjoyable and organized. A special thanks goes to Chris Marks for his donation of time and labor and to Bill Wetterau and Jerome Hansen for their help in “dressing up” the Lillicrapp



Lillicrapp House Walk

House. People coming to the Visitors Center will note the lighting along the walkway done by the RHS Thursday Crew, the information sign completed by Hayden Borchardt, and the handicapped ramp by David Rashid (under Harry's leadership) – the latter two Eagle Scout projects completed this year which add to the attractiveness and accessibility of the building. The "finishing touches" are Harry Niemann's shutters and the powder coated railing accents. We finalized the Lillicrapp project with a very successful dedication ceremony during this year's Threshere. Congratulations to RHS on the completion of this major addition to the Historical Park.

The 16th Threshere this year proved to be somewhat of a challenge with the rain on Sunday. However, final numbers were only slightly lower than the past several years. Thanks again to all the volunteers helping at the show. (As always, it was all about the equipment!) Hope we can count on you again for next year.





Spring Events

- Antique Appraisal & Chili Lunch – Feb 15th 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p. m.at the Richfield Fire Hall
- Maple Syrup Family Day –March 28th at the Richfield Historical Park

General RHS Meetings: Richfield Village Hall, 7:00 P.M.

- January 22, 2015 “Winston Churchill” – Randy Otto (Richfield Fire Hall)
- February 26, 2015..... “Blue Men & River Monsters, Folklore of the North” – John Zimm
- March 26, 2015 “Wisconsin Shipwrecks” – Tamara Thomsen* (pending)
- April 23, 2015 “The Farm at Ten Chimneys” – Erika Laabs
- May 28, 2015 “ Harley Davidson Family Memories” – Jean Davidson

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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 purchased ads for our 2014 booklet (visit www.richfieldhistoricalsociety.org to see a complete list) and all who have donated to the Messer/Mayer Mill Foundation Fund.

Wheat (\$500 or more)

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- Voss Insurance (Vintage Baseball Games & Car Show)

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- IBEW 494 (Electrical Work)
- Milwaukee Art Museum: Kohl's Color Wheels (Art Fair)
- No Mosquitoes 4U (Spraying Discount - Art Fair & Vintage Baseball/Car Show)
- Obermeyer's "41" Auto Body (Vintage Baseball Game & Car Show - 2 Plaques)
- Richfield Service (Vintage Baseball Game & Car Show - Emergency Car Kit)
- 92.5 FM WBWI & WBKV AM 1470 (Advertising - Thresheree)
- Wolf Bros.Fuel (LP Gas - Thresheree)