



McFarland Historical Society

5814 MAIN STREET, MCFARLAND, WISCONSIN 53558 PH: 608-838-3992

Issue NO. 47

Feb 15, 2013

For a color version, Go online: <http://www.mcfarlandhistorical.org>

2013 Annual Meeting of the McFarland Historical Society

McFarland Municipal Center, Sunday, March 3, 2013, 1-4 P.M.

Can it be that McFarland High School is fifty years old?? Some of our members will recall the long struggle to establish a high school in McFarland. Superintendent Scott Brown and Principal Jim Hickey will speak on the formation and development of the high school at the MHS Annual Meeting on Sunday, March 3, from 1 to 3 PM in the Community Room of the Municipal Building. A progress report on the Larson House and recognition of contributors will also be featured. The treats are always good and the discussion is always lively. We hope to see you there!

The Beginnings of McFarland High School

Edited by Gini Nichols

Fifty years ago in the summer of 1962, construction of the first McFarland High School was completed. It had been an uphill battle but with the dauntless support of many residents and the leadership and legal maneuvering of Attorney Lloyd Schneider, the dream that started in the mid-1950's became reality.

Prior to the establishment of McFarland High School, students attended classes in Monona, Stoughton, or Madison. Progress to start a high school in McFarland began in earnest when Edwards Park was added to the village in 1955. In 1956, the Waubesa School District #6 was dissolved to become part of the McFarland School District #8.



McFarland High School under construction during the early spring of 1962.

The school board asked McFarland attorney Lloyd Schneider to head up the effort to create a high school district for McFarland. Others helping in this effort were Harold Jahnke, Gilbert Blum, and Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Erdahl. There were several obstacles to the establishment of a high school district: 1. The oil tank farms were in the Monona Grove Union High School District. The tank farm area was a large tax base that Monona Grove would not give up. 2. The city of Madison was in the process of annexing the tank farm area. 3. The State Superintendent of Schools had determined that McFarland was too small a community for a high school. 4. The Dane County School Committee had tentatively approved consolidation of the Deerfield, Cottage Grove and the McFarland School Districts into one high school district with the high school to be built in Cottage Grove.

Legal proceedings to annex the tank farms to the Village of McFarland were begun in February of 1959. Attorney Schneider convinced the State Superintendent, Angus Rothwell, to withdraw his opposition to a high school in McFarland with the decision to be left to the Dane County School Committee. In 1960, the petition of the Village of Monona to annex the tank farm area was ruled null and void due to an incorrect description of the land. Meanwhile, Lloyd Schneider had convinced a majority of the members of the Dane County School Committee that McFarland deserved a high school and that the tank farm area should be included in the McFarland High School District.

A school board appointed for the new district resolved to issue bonds and construct a high school building. Now the McFarland Union High School District could legally annex the tank farms. A building referendum election was held on January 24, 1961, to approve a bond issue of \$650,000 and was approved by a vote of 329 for and 14 against. Parts of Door Creek, Hope, Meyers, Lakeside, and Oakside Districts were annexed to both the McFarland Union High School District and the McFarland Grade School District in 1961. The two districts were united in 1962.

**More details about the battle for the high school is recorded in City of the Second Lake, A History of McFarland, Wisconsin.*



Wisconsin in the Civil War

by Wes Licht

“**W**isconsin in the Civil War” was the lobby theme for our museum this past year. In conjunction with the 150th anniversary of the Civil War, we wanted to recognize the important role our state and its men and women played in this national conflict. More than 90,000 Wisconsin soldiers marched off to battle as women and families at home sacrificed to support their loved ones. Many troops returned emotionally shredded or physically crippled to a state that would be greatly changed during these difficult years. About 12,000 other state soldiers would never return at all, dying in far-off places.

Thanks to Richard Kohl, Wes Licht, Clara and Orie McGowan, Janet Moore and Eric Opsahl for their generous contributions to this exhibit. Dick, Clara, Orie and Janet loaned important artifacts, replicas and materials. Eric’s timely donation of many unique items complemented the museum’s collection, especially with regard to the Black Hat Brigade. Dick, Janet and Wes worked together to plan and construct the various parts of the display to tell the story of Wisconsin in the Civil War.

Anyone wishing to see this display in the next two months before it is disassembled needs to contact a board member of the McFarland Historical Society.



Third Grade Visitors

by Wes Licht

In October all eight classes of third graders from Waubesa Intermediate School (WIS) visited the museum as part of their study of early McFarland history. Each class tour began with an introduction to the window display (Bake on Saturday) and this year’s featured lobby exhibit (Wisconsin in the Civil War). Wes Licht led a brief discussion about the valiant black hat soldiers of the Iron Brigade, Old Abe - the Civil War eagle, and Cordelia Harvey – First Lady and Civil War angel.



Meg Nielsen is describing the Norwegian loom to a group of third graders in the museum.

Then the eager students toured the rest of the museum and log cabin in small groups. Ginny Dodson, Jane Licht, Wes Licht, Dale Marsden, Meg Nielsen and Keith Voelkers took turns leading the curious 9-year-olds, highlighting each display and attempting to answer every question from their inquisitive minds. It’s always a treat to hear the “oh’s, ah’s, awesome’s” and “cool” comments about something 50, 60 or 100 years old that’s being rediscovered by a child of the 21st century. Almost an hour passes by very quickly for everyone, leaving the guides breathless at times and very appreciative of the third grade WIS teachers that do full-time duty each day of the school year.



Wes Licht, (above), showing a group of third graders how the bed in the Skare Log Cabin is constructed. Gini Nichols, (second from right, at left), is talking about the 1920’s kitchen in the museum.

LARSON HOUSE PROGRESS

by Jane Licht, Larson House Committee Chair

Much progress has been made since the McFarland Historical Society Board of Directors purchased the Larson House property at 6003 Exchange Street on February 1, 2012. The Board appointed the Larson House Planning Committee to plan the restoration of the Larson House. Members are Jane Licht, chairperson, Dale Marsden, Judy St. Clair, Ginny Dodson, Jackie Utter, Ken Brost, Lee Ackley, Meg Nielsen, and Thelma Allen. Their long-range plan was approved by the Village Landmark Commission.



Wes Licht and Lee Ackley check the fit of the railings on the backporch.

The back and Bashford Street sides of the house have been completely restored, including new cedar siding milled to resemble the original boards, a wooden cellar door and a side porch using the original porch columns, spandrels and balusters.

Historical Society members and other volunteers are currently working inside the house, preparing rooms for plaster repair. The woodwork is in remarkably good condition but the floors will need sanding, staining and varnishing.



Our volunteer wallpaper strippers. Standing L to R: Thelma Allen, Jane Licht, Dawn Bolstad, Darcy Kelly. Seated: Ginny Dodson, Mary Pat Lytle.



Plaques, like this one for the Larson Family Room, will be mounted in the named rooms when completed.

Once the restoration is completed, the Larson House will be a “window” into the early 1920’s when electricity first came to McFarland. The John Larson family lived in the home for nearly 80 years. This house museum will represent a celebration of local history, the Larson family and other prominent McFarland families. The building will be open to the public for special events and tours will be given to school-aged children.

Rooms are being named to honor long time McFarland residents such as Dorothy Helmke and her daughter Crystal Lokken whose children donated the \$10,000 for naming rights. McFarland State Bank, the family of Hartman Olson, and the family of Obed Larson, in honor of his five daughters, have also committed to naming rooms in the Larson House. The gardens will be named after Stanley Dodson. These donations as well as the hundreds of residents who have “bought a board” are funding the restoration. In addition, many local contractors have donated time and materials, and scores of volunteers have contributed to the cleanup and restoration. This is truly a community project. If you wish to donate your time or name a room, contact Jane Licht at 838-8178 or licht.jane@gmail.com.



One of the first jobs of cleaning away the old garage was completed by members of the Lions Club.



D&J Heating donated and installed a new furnace.

Recognition for Contractors and Volunteers at the Annual Meeting

A number of local contractors and other business people have donated significant amounts of labor, materials and money to the Larson House. These people will be invited to the annual meeting to receive special recognition for their contributions: Bryon Spangler, Steve Washa, Louis Fahey, Jeff Morstad, Mark Kampmeier, Darrell Krenz, Greg Hyland, Jeff Havey, Mark Nelson, Dick Larson, Gary Lehnner, and Al Hoyt. Scores of volunteers will also be invited to the meeting to receive recognition for their work on and in the Larson House.

Landscaping at the Larson House

You may have noticed lots of activity on the property around the Larson House. Capital City Tree Experts cut down dead and dying trees and trimmed others. Capital City Concrete installed new sidewalks. Badger



Capital City Concrete installed new sidewalks.

Deck and Landscaping re-contoured the back, side and front yards for proper water drainage. The Larson House Landscape Committee members and other volunteers planted over 200 tulip bulbs along the Bashford Street side of the house and plan to establish more flower beds. Sean Kohl is working with the committee to get approval to build an herb garden as an Eagle Scout project. Thanks to all of these groups for their contributions towards making a lovely setting for the Larson House.

Needs For the Larson House

Many items of furniture and household goods have been donated to the Larson House and are being stored in the attic. A low buffet casbinet for the dining rom, a small occasional table for the living room and oriental rugs appropriate for an elegant 1920's home are still desired. If you would like to donate any of these items, please contact Jane Licht at 838-8178 or licht.jane@gmail.com



Wes Licht and Dale Marsden are caught hauling furniture up to the attic.

Thanks to the Board Buyers

Thanks to all of you who have "bought a board" for the Larson House. In 2012, over 250 individuals and families purchased boards, most in honor or in memory of loved ones. The "Buy a Board" campaign will continue until December 31, 2013, when it is hoped that the new siding on the House will be completed. Make sure your name is on the list of donors in the Larson House! Go to www.mcfarlandhistorical.org to make a purchase or contact Judy St.Clair, 838-8739.

Thanks to the Chocolate Fest!

Thanks to those dedicated Chocolate Fest ladies and gentlemen for hosting another successful McFarland Chocolate Fest on the first Saturday in November at the Curling Club. The amazing offering of chocolate desserts, the silent auction, and a raffle for Jeff Way's elegant diamond pendant brought in over \$7000 for the Larson House. The Chocolate Fest money is used to keep the lights on, the furnace going and other required maintenance at the Larson House.



Jackie Utter and Ginny Dodson selling tickets and the Chocolate Fest.

Member Obituaries

Lloyd W. Hein, age 99

Lloyd passed away April 28, 2012. He was the son of the last practicing blacksmith in Madison. He was born Aug. 31, 1912, to Victor and Carrie (Christenson) Hein. On Aug. 31, 1937, Lloyd married Celestine Trauba in Greenville. He is survived by his loving wife of almost 75 years, Sally; six children, Pat Gaustad, Clarence (Jill), Bill (Sue), Carol Ford, Dan and Jim; 13 grandchildren; 19 great grandchildren; and one great-great-grandson. Lloyd was preceded in death by his parents; two sons-in-law, Gerald Gaustad and James Ford; three sisters; and a brother. He worked for many years at the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation.

Lucille M. Shorette, age 78

Lucille passed away at her home on Friday, June 15, 2012, surrounded by her family. She was born in Freeport, Ill., on Dec. 23, 1933, the daughter of Albert and Evelyn (Otte) Hummermeier. On July 23, 1955, Lucille married Victor Shorette. She will be missed by her husband, Victor; four children, Stephen Shorette and his partner, Steven Chickering, Susan (Doug) Wedel, Diane (Dave) Ogden and David Shorette; six grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; and sister, Betty Rockett. Lucille worked for the McFarland School District and for the State of Wisconsin Department of Revenue.

Frank Hrovat, age 88

Frank died Oct. 15, 2012. He was born Sept. 30, 1924, in Milwaukee, to the late John and Theresa (Fink) Hrovat, both Slovenian immigrants. Frank served in the U.S. Army during World War II. He married the former Betty Reynolds in 1953. He was a long time member of the McFarland Lutheran Church. Frank is survived by five children, Judy (David) Larson of Oconomowoc, Jerry Hrovat of McFarland, Cathy (David) Schwabauer of Lawrence, Kan., Sandy Hrovat of Madison, and Jeanne (Scott Staedter) Hrovat of Madison; eight grandchildren; three great-grandchildren. Frank was preceded in death by his parents and wife, Betty.

Shirley Ann Buhr, age 73

Shirley died Tuesday, Oct. 23, 2012. She was born Dec. 31, 1938 in Beloit, the daughter of Stuart D. and Eleanor (Allen) Klinger. Shirley married Frederick J. Buhr on August 25, 1962. He predeceased her on April 19, 2012. Survivors include her son, John Frederick of McFarland; sister, Barbara Klinger Thomas of Fishers, Ind.; sister-in-law, Joan (David) Crapo of Bolingbrook, Ill.; and nieces and nephews. Shirley was a registered nurse.

Mike Harried, age 52

Mike died November 28, 2012. He was the son of Hjalmer "Jim" and Lorraine Harried. He was a Village Trustee of McFarland from 1997 until 2005, Village President from 2007 until present and served on many village committees. He was a member of the Madison Curling Club. Mike is survived by his parents; brothers and sister, Mark (Marcia) and their children, Amanda, Brittany and Daniel of New Glarus, Cheryl (Jay) Wilson and their children, Meghan, Morgan and Marissa of

Verona, Eric (Tanisha) and their children, Chelsey, Whitney, Jack and Jaret of Cottage Grove and Marshall David and his daughter Ellie of McFarland; paternal grandmother, Verna Harried of Stoughton.

Marvel A. Edwards, age 97

Marvel died on Dec. 21, 2012. She was born June 30, 1915, the daughter of Norwegian immigrants, Mike and Josie Stolen. She married Milo Edwards on Feb. 11, 1935. Marvel is survived by her daughter, Pat Edwards Rossman (Wilson); daughter-in-law, Kae Edwards; and eight grandchildren, Rory Rossman (Theresa), Robin Rossman Urso (Cain) Beth Edwards Huwe (Dave), Tim Edwards, Jean Edwards Grenier, Pat Sullivan, Mike Sullivan (Marguerite) and Dan Sullivan (Sherry). She will also be missed and remembered by her dear great grandchildren, Kayla, Emily and Erin Rossman; Chanel, Cheyanne and Cale Urso; Ted Huwe, Anna Miller; Amy Katie, Karley and Michael Sullivan; one great great grandchild Lennon Urso. She was preceded in death by her husband, Milo; a great-granddaughter, Amelia Huwe; and her son, Dean

Fern Louise Allen, age 79

Fern passed away Jan. 2, 2013. Fern was born in Crandon on May 16, 1933, the daughter of the late Louis and Mildred (Knoke) Rosio. Fern was united in marriage to Louis E. "Gene" Allen on March 20, 1954 in Crandon. The couple moved to McFarland in 1970. In 1982, Fern established "Earth Designs Floral Shoppe." Fern was honored "Citizen of the Year" in 2009. Fern is survived by her loving husband, Gene; five children: Debra, Steven, Jacquelyn, Daniel and Randall; four grandchildren, Matthew, Samuel, Wolfgang, and Sheridan; two sisters and one brother, Thelma, Marjorie and Herbert.

Chocolate Fest Raffle Winners

by Gini Nichols

The lucky first prize winner is Lee Weber. Lee and her husband lived in Illinois and bought a cottage on Lake Waubesa in 1969 next to Glen and Gen Brandt who became their close friends. When Lee's husband retired in 1995, they moved up to Wisconsin and lived in their summer home permanently. Lee and her daughter Sherry Blanchar who lives just down the street, were thrilled when she won the beautifully designed diamond pennant that Jeff Way of the Diamond Boutique made for the Chocolate Fest raffle. Congratulations to Lee Weber!

The second prize of \$250 went to Sarah Dodson Wilson. Sarah grew up in McFarland and graduated from McFarland High School in 1990. After graduating from Lawrence University in 1994, she met Ian Wilson and they married and moved to Connecticut. Sarah, Ian and their two children Kate (10) and Henry (8) now live in Glastonbury, CT. Sarah is a Senior Claims Adjustor for The Hartford. Sarah's mother Virginia (Ginny) Dodson lives in McFarland. Congratulations to Sarah Wilson!

“Melodies and More” Fund Raiser

Treat yourself to an enjoyable evening of fine entertainment and a bit of history as Pastor Terry Peterson provides commentary and plays appropriate music on each of his six pianos featured throughout his home. Elegant hors d'oeuvres and Wollersheim wines will be served. The cost is only \$25 per person and will go toward the Larson House restoration project. The fundraiser, which begins at 7:00 p.m., may be attended on either Friday, March 8 or 15. To preserve an intimate setting, only 12 tickets will be sold for each night. To reserve tickets, please contact Meg Nielsen at 838-8274 or churchladymeg@hotmail.com.



Terry Peterson will entertain at the piano.



The Larson House as it once was.

Behind the Scenes at the Larson House



Below at left: Dave Ebert, left, rebuilt the cellar doors in the basement, pictured here with Dale Marsden.

Center: Mary Pat Lytle, Dawn Bolstad and Thelma Allen are removing old wall paper and peeled paint from the walls and ceiling in the kitchen.

Below right: A Washa Construction crew member scraping windows after a fine paint job.



Lee Ackley and Dale Marsden removing picture hanging strips from the Lokken Room walls in preparation for the plasterers.

Above: Washa Construction crew members taking a break after nearly finishing the siding on two sides of the Larson House.