

# Liberty School News

Volume 17, Number 2

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**Liberty School News** is edited by Michael and Toni Meier and is published by **German Settlement History, Inc.**, an organization dedicated to the preservation and development of historic artifacts in the Town of Spirit, Southeast Price County, including “**Our Yesterday House**” built in 1885, **Liberty School**, built in 1919 and “**The Machine Shed**” housing logging and farming tools and equipment from 1880 to 1950. You may contact us at N894 S. German Settlement Road, Ogema, WI 54459. (715)564-3299 or [gshinc@centurylink.net](mailto:gshinc@centurylink.net). Check out our web site at [www.germansettlementhistory.org](http://www.germansettlementhistory.org) GSHI is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit tax exempt organization. **You are welcome to visit us at any time, but call ahead to make sure we are home to show you around.**

## What a Year!

We intended to publish this issue in August, but we had such a busy and excellent summer that we never got it written and mailed until now.

Busy and excellent? Yes.

Our Barn Dance on Memorial Day Weekend drew a big crowd in spite of some rain. The rain forced everyone inside and the dancing and the pie and ice cream seemed to please all in attendance. A lot of items were sold in the silent auction and the evening was a fund-raising success.

Then we had a summer of visitors who toured our three buildings. Some came from far away, several visitors were from Europe.

Local fourth graders and a 4-H group were especially interested in **Liberty School**. Like other youngsters they were fascinated by the whole idea of a one-room school with eight grades learning together. Older folks often remarked on their own experiences in a school like this decades ago.

Visitors to **Our Yesterday House** were often struck by a deeper realization that the “good old days” required a lot of work on the part of those who cooked, sewed, cleaned and cared for children.

Similarly, the displays of logging and farming equipment in **The Machine Shed** reminded visitors that crops and cattle, firewood and lumber were not come by easily. Many visitors enjoyed seeing tools and equipment they themselves used when they were growing up.

Oh yes, we also had an Open House and Picnic on July 25!

Plan to come see us next summer! We'll have our **Barn Dance on May 29** and our **Open House and Picnic on July 30**. But, you can visit us any time in **2016** and together we'll have another busy and excellent year!

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Thanks to **Joyce Bant** who sent us the following:

The other day a not so elderly (65) lady said something to her son about driving a Jalopy and he looked at her quizzically and said what the heck is a Jalopy? OMG (new phrase!) he never heard of the word jalopy! So they went to the computer and pulled up a picture from the movie "The Grapes of Wrath." Now that was a Jalopy! She knew she was old but not that old...I hope you are Hunky dory after you read this and chuckle...

**WORDS AND PHRASES REMIND US OF THE WAY WE WORD**—by Richard Lederer

About a month ago, I illuminated some old expressions that have become obsolete because of the inexorable march of technology. These phrases included "Don't touch that dial," "Carbon copy," "You sound like a broken record" and "Hung out to dry." A bevy of readers have asked me to shine light on more faded words and expressions, and I am happy to oblige:

Back in the olden days we had a lot of moxie. We'd put on our best bib and tucker and straighten up and fly right. Hubba-hubba! We'd cut a rug in some juke joint and then go necking and petting and smooching and spooning and billing and cooing and pitching woo in hot rods and jalopies in some passion pit or lovers lane. Heavens to Betsy! Gee whillikers! Jumping Jehoshaphat! Holy moley! We were in like Flynn and living the life of Riley, and even a regular guy couldn't accuse us of being a knucklehead, a nincompoop or a pill. Not for all the tea in China!

Back in the olden days, life used to be swell, but when's the last time anything was swell? Swell has gone the way of beehives, pageboys and the D.A.; of spats, knickers, fedoras, poodle skirts, saddle shoes and pedal pushers. Oh, my aching back. Kilroy was here, but he isn't anymore.

Like Washington Irving's Rip Van Winkle and Kurt Vonnegut's Billy Pilgrim, we have become unstuck in time. We wake up from what surely has been just a short nap, and before we can say, I'll be a monkey's uncle! or This is a fine kettle of fish! we discover that the words we grew up with, the words that seemed omnipresent as oxygen, have vanished with scarcely a notice from our tongues and our pens and our keyboards.

Poof, poof, poof go the words of our youth, the words we've left behind. We blink, and they're gone, evanesced from the landscape and wordscape of our perception, like Mickey Mouse wristwatches, hula hoops, skate keys, candy cigarettes, little wax bottles of colored sugar water and an organ grinders monkey.

Where have all those phrases gone? Long time passing. Where have all those phrases gone? Long time ago: Pshaw. The milkman did it. Think about the starving Armenians. Bigger than a bread box. Banned in Boston. The very idea! It's your nickel. Don't forget to pull the chain. Knee high to a grasshopper. Turn-of-the-century. Iron curtain. Domino theory. Fail safe. Civil defense. Fiddlesticks! You look like the wreck of the Hesperus. Cooties. Going like sixty. I'll see you in the funny papers. Don't take any wooden nickels. Heavens to Murgatroyd! And awa-a-ay we go!

Oh, my stars and garters!

It turns out there are more of these lost words and expressions than Carter had liver pills. This can be disturbing stuff, this winking out of the words of our youth, these words that lodge in our heart's deep core. But just as one never steps into the same river twice, one cannot step into the same language twice. Even as one enters, words are swept downstream into the past, forever making a different river.

We of a certain age have been blessed to live in changeful times. For a child each new word is like a shiny toy, a toy that has no age. We at the other end of the chronological arc have the advantage of remembering there are words that once did not exist and there were words that once strutted their hour upon the earthly stage and now are heard no more, except in our collective memory. It's one of the greatest advantages of aging. We can have archaic and eat it, too...See ya later, alligator!

## Coming into the Country—by Michael Meier

Sometime in the 1970's I began to subscribe to *The New Yorker* magazine. Each week I read it cover to cover. Imagine my surprise when in the summer of 1977 I read an article that contained the following, written by one of my favorite authors, John McPhee:

“John Borg came into the country in 1966. He was a mailman, on vacation, and he pitched his tent by American Creek a mile out of Eagle. The Army had brought him to Alaska in the nineteen-fifties—just before Alaska became a state—and (in his phrase) ‘plain opportunity’ was what had caused him to stay. He carried letters around Anchorage for a number of years while opportunity in other forms withheld itself. And then he found Eagle. From birth he had been at home among low populations in open settings. He had grown up in Spirit Township, in the hills of northern Wisconsin, and had gone to Rib Lake High School, thirteen miles away. Now here was a town smaller by far than any he had known—some log cabins and a few frame buildings aggregated on a high bank above a monumental river. It seemed to him beautiful in several respects. ‘The quality of the people who lived here at the time is what made it particularly attractive.’ In 1968, he and his wife, Betty, took over the Eagle Roadhouse, providing bunks and board for exploration geologists, forest-fire fighters, and anyone else who might happen into Eagle. Before long, they had the propane franchise; and Borg became, as well, the regional Selective Service registrar, and president of the Eagle Historical Society, and the local reporter for the National Weather Service, and the sole officer (at this river port of entry) representing the United States Customs Service, and—on the payroll of the United States Geological Survey—the official observer of the Yukon. Borg had left Anchorage because half of the people of Alaska lived there and that was ‘just too many.’ Now, hundreds of miles distant in the bush, he was on his way to becoming a one-man city. Inevitably, with his postal background, he also became the postmaster—of Eagle, Alaska 99738—and, as such, he is the central figure in the town. He is a slim, fairly tall man, who looks ten years younger in a hat. He was born in 1937. He has a narrow-brimmed cap made from camouflage cloth that, once on his head, is unlikely to come off, indoors or out, and gives him a boyish, jaunty air as he cancels stamps, weighs packages, and exercises his quick, ironic wit. There is a lightness about him, of manner, appearance, and style, that saves him from the weight of his almost numberless responsibilities. One place where the hat comes off is in the small log cabin called Eagle City Hall. Inside are a big iron stove, benches for interested observers, and a long table where Borg sits with the Eagle Common Council. His bared forehead is a high one—an inch or two higher than it once was. His eyes seem lower beneath it. His regard is uncommonly stern. Shadows come into his mustache, which turns into an iron brush. The youth in the post office has been returned to sender. Behind the heavier demeanor at the head of the Council table is John Borg the Mayor...” —(continued next page)

Thus begins a segment of the published work, *Coming into the Country*, by John McPhee. What caught my eye back in 1977 was the name “John Borg.” He was a few years ahead of me in high school, **Rib Lake High School!** Of course “**Spirit Township**” leaped off the page, too. Here was John Borg, whose family were friends with my family, in *The New Yorker*. Amazing! John McPhee was writing about his experiences with the people in Alaska and John Borg and his life in Eagle, Alaska, was covered in pages and pages of detail and story. *Coming into the Country* was serialized in three issues of the magazine and later published as a book. You can still buy new or used copies of the book on line. It remains a classic. Nearly forty years on it is still a good read.

Recently, John Borg wrote to us saying, “Oct. 6, 2015, Eagle, Alaska. Hi Folks, Perhaps you might find this list of some interest? John McPhee was here the summer of 1976. So in 40 years there has been many changes in our residents. (John includes a list of some three dozen who are now deceased as well as a number who moved away from Eagle or are unaccounted for.)

“It’s down to only a few times in the summer while conducting tours of the museums that someone will mention of having recently read his book.”

“We are certainly enjoying the newsletter. I’m sure that Herbie Magnuson could come up with many articles of interest. Keep up the good work!!

Best Regards, John”

## **Stories from Stone Lake—by Herb Magnuson**

On the northwest shore line of Stone Lake there is a small park and boat landing. This came about because of the foresight of the Town of Spirit Chairman, Arthur Johnson. He was the head of our town government for 30 years, through the great depression, World War II and the busy years that followed.

Our town received this property from unpaid taxes during the war. The town board decided that rather than sell it they would build a road to this property. Chairman, Johnson appointed three fellows to a road committee and they were Max Scheller, Lloyd Tripp and me.

The town board wanted a road built on the high ground of the Spirit and Hill town line. It was to go from the intersection of Highway C and the road into the George Blomberg farm to the Town of Spirit property.

On a cold October day 65 years ago we started from that intersection and went due north. We each had an ax and a hunter’s compass. These two fellows in the prime of their life and were seasoned woodsmen and I was a 20 year old fellow

tagging along. The most interesting thing I noticed was they both had very powerful voices. As we separated into the brush and small trees you could hear them at all times as we walked in the woods. Lloyd worked for years as a teamster skidding logs. He could spot the easiest way through any brush pile. Max was a natural born builder and his eyesight on judging elevations was uncanny.

The first thing we found was a low spot in the path of the proposed road. Here we decided to do as our forefathers had done which is to put a kink in the road. We had decided to go around either to the right or the left. Not like in this modern world where money and big machines have the road go straight, Now whenever I see a curve in a road, I wonder what someone went around years ago. We used axes to blaze a tree. Whenever we agreed where the center of the road was to be, then we would chop the bark off on two sides of a small tree. This would be used to send the cutters in the direction of the next blaze.

When we got to the lake which we had aimed for, we realized we were looking down from a big hill. Max with his keen sense of practical experience picked the route that went down the hill. Today as we use this road it doesn't seem as formidable as it did back then. A few weeks later loggers cut the trees that we had marked. These three guys are responsible for all of the curves that are found in the road today.

Now that road is named Park Drive and there are many people living on it. I only wish that other young men could have had the experience I had working with fellows like Max and Lloyd. I cannot drive on this road without recalling those two great guys who worked with me to plan that road. We did what our forefathers had done, going around the soft spots and taking the easiest way down the hill.

### **Stone Lake as seen from the road end of Park Drive**



## **Arthur G. Johnson—by Bill Caynor, CEO of Price Electric**

At the Annual Meeting of Price Electric Cooperative held in Phillips, Wisconsin on June 10, 2015, Bill Caynor, CEO of Price Electric, presented a commemorative crystal paragon trophy to the family of Arthur Johnson. Maryalice McHugh, granddaughter of Arthur Johnson and a member of the German Settlement History Inc. Board of Directors received the award in memory of her grandfather. Here is the text of Bill Caynor's presentation:

“Almost 75 years ago on July 9<sup>th</sup>, 1940, your cooperative, Price Electric, was incorporated. The board held its first meeting ten days later and signed their first REA loan for \$336,000 that November 4<sup>th</sup>. This loan was to construct the Phillips substation and 387 miles of distribution line. By February of 1942, the substation was completed and the 600 KVA transformer energized, to bring electricity to meters installed stretching from Fifield to Westboro. At this time your cooperative employed only five employees: a cashier, bookkeeper, one lineman, a helper and C. F. Baldwin as the Project Superintendent. These employees were not alone as they had contractor and member help and the assistance and support of a nine member Board. The fortitude and perseverance it took to blaze a new trail where one didn't exist was insurmountable. One man who led the way was Arthur G. Johnson, the President of the Board of Directors for the first nine year of the cooperatives inception (1940-49).

“Arthur G. Johnson was the eldest son of Swedish immigrants, born on February 22, 1888, at the family homestead, now called **Our Yesterday House**, in the Town of Spirit. He operated a 156 acre farm, where he developed and raised a high-grade of Guernsey cattle. He was progressive and community oriented, which was demonstrated with being:

- Chairman, Town of Spirit, 30 years
- Member Price County Board of Supervisor, 23 years
- President of the Agriculture Society, 20 years
- Chairman, Production Marketing Administration Committee, 18 years
- Original member & 1<sup>st</sup> Commander, Spirit's American Legion Post 452
- Active member of the Spirit United Methodist Church
- Led the way for organization of Soil Conservation District in Price, Co.

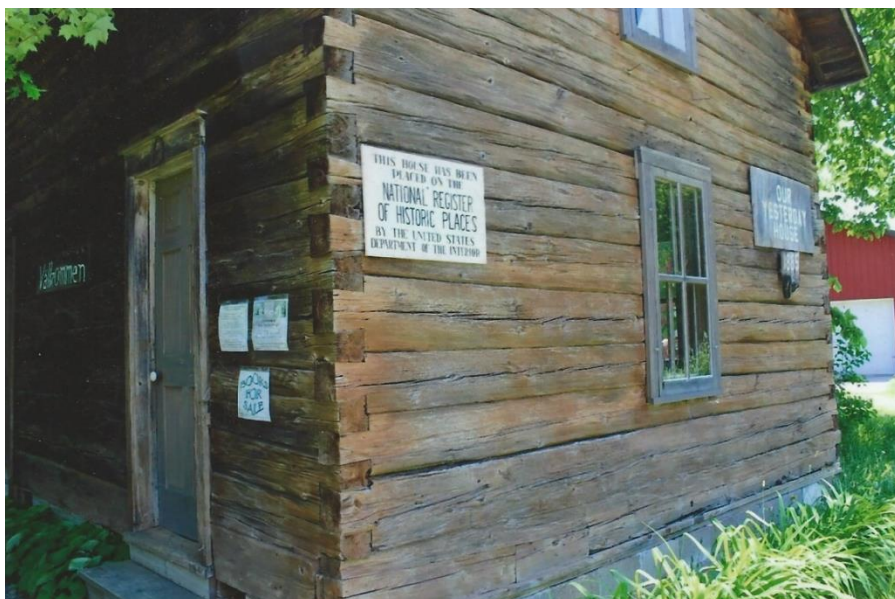
“During Arthur's tenure as Price Electric's Board President the cooperative built three substations (Phillips, Butternut, Ogema) and energized 2,420 rural homes. He took the cooperative from an idea, to a reality, which is something that has impacted every one of us here today. It's because of his self-sacrificing, forward-thinking and commitment to rural life and electrification that we recognize him on this occasion.

He truly was a paragon—someone of exceptional merit—and he is the inspiration for this award, the Price Electric Paragon Award.



[Bill Caynor mentioned that Arthur Johnson was born in 1888 in the house we now call **Our Yesterday House**. At that time it stood about a mile and a half from our current German Settlement History, Inc. site. A number of families lived in the house through the years. Gene Meier bought the property where the house was located and in 1972 he and his father, Roy Meier, moved it to the Meier Homestead. Roy & Helen developed it into a museum and after they passed away it remained at the Homestead until Gene donated it to German Settlement History, Inc. In 2003 it was moved a half mile from the Homestead to its present location next to Liberty School where we now have it furnished with local household items that might have been used by a family in about 1905.]

### **Our Yesterday House**



“I found the following English assignment written by my Mother, Carol Johnson Harrsch, about her grandfather CB Nelson. Before coming to America from Sweden he was a merchant marine and sailed around the world. Mom and her brother Bob Johnson, loved to hear his stories of his adventures.

—Maryalice Harrsch McHugh

## **Yarns of an Old Sailor—by Carol Johnson Harrsch**

After all of our evening tasks were done, we youngsters hurried off to find Grandfather. Usually we would find him sitting in his room smoking his pipe. The only light would be that given off by the fireplace.

“Please Gramps, tell us a story,” we would plead.

“Well now, it seems that you have heard all my fairy tales,” he would say. “How about a true story tonight?”

“Oh that would be swell” we would pipe up and then settle down while good old Grandfather started his story.

“Well now,” he began, “it was the time we were sailing from Calcutta to Madagascar. Everything had gone fine until one day the wind began to blow a little harder than usual. By late afternoon we knew we would have a bad storm that night. And did it ever storm! Why it was the worst one we had had for many weeks. The wind was cold and raw and it felt like a knife was cutting you when it hit you. The Captain ordered another mate and I to climb up and take down the sail that was being torn asunder by the wind. In those days we didn’t have these nifty steam ships like you have now. Ours was one of those old fashioned ones that bobbed around like a tub on the water.”

“The night wasn’t fit for a dog to be out in, but orders are orders so up we climbed. It wasn’t any easy job hanging on with one bare hand and working with the other one. It was cold and wet and the ship was swaying from one side to another. You didn’t know what moment you were apt to be thrown down into the bottomless ocean.”

“My hands were so cold. I didn’t have any feeling in them. I looked at my friend and I could tell that he couldn’t hold on much longer. Our job was only half finished. Then there came an awful blast of wind and the waves dashed higher than ever before. My partner lost his hold and fell into the depths of the ocean. Somehow or other I managed to get down without following him but I don’t know how.”



“See,” said Grandfather, “I still have the marks on my hands where I hung onto the mast.” He ended the story here by showing us the scars left on his hands from that terrible night.

“Gee! Gramps, I’m sure glad you didn’t fall in,” said my little brother. “What would we ever do without a swell Grandfather like you? Now tell us the story about the monkey you had” said Bob.

“One more story and it will be time for you young ones to hurry off to bed.” Said Grandfather. Then he cleared his throat with a loud Ahem and began to relate Bob’s favorite story.

“At one port we docked there was a native going along the pier trying to sell monkeys to the sailors. I really didn’t want one and certainly wouldn’t know what to with it after I had bought it, but the native was so cruel to the poor animal that I had to buy it. When I brought it back to the ship the rest of the sailors were a bit disgusted with me for taking pity on the monkey. But they soon grew very fond of him and gave him the name Cedric.”

“Now Cedric, like any other monkey, was very mischievous. Because of his foxiness and because he was so cute he soon became the mascot of the crew. He was particularly fond of tobacco and sugar and would swipe either whenever he had a chance. If he was caught during the theft of tobacco he would try conceal his wrongdoing by sticking the pipe into his mouth. However, he was never quite sure which end of the pipe belonged in his mouth so he was as often seen with the stem sticking out as the bowl. The sailors in order to save their tobacco would hide it under the mattress. Cedric would always find it and the men more than once would find their beds all mussed up.”

“One day Cedric became very ill. Evidently it was caused from the variety of food he chose to eat between his regular meals. Sugar and tobacco certainly could do no one any good. We did everything possible to make him well again but nothing helped. So, poor Cedric died and was given a solemn burial at sea.”

“Gee Gramps, it’s too bad he died” said my little brother. “Us kids could have played with him if he hadn’t”

“I reckon that he would have been a mighty old monkey had he lived, my lad. It’s nigh on to fifty years since I owned him. Now you children had better scamper off to bed.” As we ran off to bed, I said, “Tomorrow night you’ll tell us about the time you were on the police force in Madagascar won’t you Gramps?”

Fri, Jul 24, 2015 11:18 PM

GSHI Board and Members:

I stumbled upon your website only a few hours ago but I have already enjoyed many of your photos and newsletters. You are to be complimented on a very fine organization and many accomplishments.

I believe I may have had family members who farmed about two miles south of 86 on the east side of German Settlement Road in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Not long ago I was pressing my dad, Warren E. Carlson, for details about his boyhood and extended family. Dad is 92 and not sure of all the details, but he recalls travelling from Chicago to spend summers in Spirit helping out on the extended family's farm. That would have been about 1930 - 1937 or so.

The farm belonged to the Olson family. Charles Olson and Anna Olson (nee Carlson) were born in Sweden and emigrated to northern Wisconsin, details unknown. The Olson family children were Harry, Ralph, Mildred, Vera, and my dad's mother, Ruth. Their birthdates would have been in the late 1890s.

Somewhere in the family there is a good-sized framed photograph of their farmhouse, which for years was always on display at my grandparent's house. I shall renew the search. I'm certain there are also some photographs of family members on the Spirit farm somewhere.

The last remaining Olson in Spirit was Ralph, who never married, and resided on the farm (or the area) until his death in the late 1960s, I believe. I have no idea what happened to the farm or the house after his passing. When you're a teenager family history doesn't capture your attention as much as when you're older.

Anyway, please feel free to share this email with interested persons. It would be a real treat to confirm a little family history.

Best wishes for your open house and picnic Saturday. It's bound to be cooler that it was [today](#) (97 with humidity to match) in my home of Overland Park, Kansas.

Best regards,

Rich Carlson

[\(913\) 269-5071](tel:9132695071) Rich Carlson [rbmgr86@aol.com](mailto:rbmgr86@aol.com)

[Readers: Please feel free to communicate any information you may have to Rich.]

May 17, 2015

Dear Michael & Toni,

Enjoyed another Liberty School News, especially the article by Gene remembering roller skating at the Spirit Town Hall. Here is a bit of my recollections – you may include it in the next edition if you care to.

## **Roller Skating Memories—by Dixie Garlow Zastrow**

Nostalgia! Gene's article in the recent Liberty School News about roller skating at the Spirit Town Hall brought back a flood of memories!

I especially recall my sister Sandy and I washing our hair, putting on clean blouses and jeans for the evening, only to be 'white-washed' after a few times around the floor. The skates created a fine dust on the floor, covering us from head to toe, but we all looked the same!

During the years we enjoyed skating there, it was held on Wednesday nights and was the highlight of our week. The cost was 50 cents, and I suspect there were times that was the last \$1.00 my dad had, but we managed to go.

One night a group of kids from Tomahawk came out and one of them asked me to skate. He and others continued to come to skate and we eventually began to date. We have now celebrated sixty-three years together, thanks to roller skating at the Spirit Town Hall! Our wedding dance was held at the hall to commemorate our meeting there.

I also feel a connection to the German Settlement, my mom having been born there to Carl and Selma Scheller. I am deeply sad that I did not have the opportunity to know them. I did however know many from that area through skating, 4-H and high school.

I feel very blessed to have grown up in that vicinity (Spirit & Spirit Falls) and during that era – no better place or time.

Enclosed is \$25 for membership.

Sincerely,

Dixie

## Father Menard?—Contributed by Marci Braski

As you may know, we have been pursuing the mystery of the rock with a cross carved on it and the related? mystery of the death of Father Menard. Recently Marci Braski reminded us of the story that appeared in the September 24, 1998 issue of The Bee, Philips, Wisconsin. Here is the text of that story which was written by our friend Cathy Peterson:

After searching a farm field in the Town of Spirit at various times for 15 years, no evidence has been found that the body of Father Rene' Menard, a Jesuit missionary priest from France, is buried there. Royal Henson, a founder and past president of the Lincoln County Historical Society, said he is very disappointed that a search on Friday, September 18, [1998] did not turn up some evidence of Menard's remains.

"Roy Meier and I had been searching this area since we first met in 1983." He said, "Roy Meier died some time ago and I really want to be able to find some proof of what we were looking for. I am 83 years old and I don't think I'll be able to come out to this field again."

Henson said he met Meier while looking for some information on old Indian walking trails that were in the area. He said people told him to talk to Meier, who was born and raised in the Spirit area and was very interested in local history.

"When I met Roy, he told me about a cross-marked stone he and his brother had found in 1917 while picking rock from one of their fields," he said. "Roy said he had kept the stone because he thought the cross-marking might have a special meaning."

Henson said he told Meier about Father Menard, who had come to northern Wisconsin from Quebec in 1660 to minister to the Native Americans and disappeared somewhere in the area. He said he told Meier the cross-marked stone, found along the bank of the Spirit River, might have been used mark the priest's burial place.

"No one knows for sure what happened to Father Menard." Henson said, "There is a historical marker about him near Merrill but I have never believed he was buried in that area. It made more sense to me that he would have been traveling along the Spirit River to reach his destination."

Henson said Meier felt sure, too, that there might be a good chance that Father Menard was buried near the Spirit River. He agreed to help Henson and others who were interested look for evidence of the priest's remains in the fields of the Meier homestead located near the river bank.

Roy and I, along with any others we could get to help us, have been looking over these fields for 15 years." He said. "We never found anything special while Roy was alive, but last year we found an unusual formation of rocks, just under the ground."

The searchers were unable to complete the search at that time, but on Friday, Henson returned to the Meier homestead with Lynn and Faye Greenfield, Hamberg, who helped in last fall's search and Joe Borchardt, Merrill, who used a metal detector to help relocate the rock formation.

After digging for several hours, and carefully sorting the rocks and sifting the soil for any evidence, the searchers concluded they had not found Father Menard's final resting place.

"It was a good possibility that we might have found something," said Henson. "Many years ago, people were buried in shallow graves, filled in and rocks were placed on top of the grave to keep animals out. This is what this spot looked like."

Henson said he believes, however, any remains of the missionary priest may still be buried somewhere in the area.

According to Menard's diary, preserved in France by the Jesuits, Menard was traveling in northern Wisconsin when he disappeared, just a day away from his destination which was thought to be a Huron Indian village located near what is now Chelsea, in Taylor County.

"According to some history books, Father Menard was abandoned by the Indians who were to help him on his journey," Henson said. "A French adventurer stayed with him as they waited for the help the Indians had promised. When no help came, the two men ventured on alone in a canoe they found until they came to rapids in a river. Although he was in poor health, Father Menard decided to walk along the river's edge until the canoe was through the rapids. The Frenchman waited for Father Menard to resume their journey in the canoe but the priest never came."

Henson said the Frenchman apparently looked for Father Menard, as did the Huron Indians from Chelsea who were waiting for him. He said the search was delayed at least two days due to a possible attack by a Sioux Indian tribe.

Father Menard's date of death is recorded as July 10, 1661, and it is possible the priest's body may have been destroyed by the elements, wild animals or another Indian tribe.

An old Wisconsin history book states that a cooking kettle belonging to Father Menard was found among the Sac Indians and some of his vestment were found in a Sioux wigwam. But what actually happened to Father Menard is still unknown.

Remember our discussion of "Mattress Making" in the last issue of LSN?

Well, Marci Braski also sent us an official document from 1941 that provides some details regarding the arrangements for doing this:

41-37

Village of Catawba  
Town

Date July 11, 1941

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Manning  
Price County Wis. State

Re: Date for Making Cotton Mattresses

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Manning:

In connection with the cotton-mattress program which is being extended in the county by the Extension Service in cooperation with the A.A.A., you have made application for making <sup>3</sup> cotton mattresses out of the 50 pounds of cotton and the 10 yards of ticking that is being furnished you for this purpose.

You may report on Friday, July, 18th,  
(Day of week) (Month) (Date)  
at 9 o'clock a.m., at Catawba Village Hall.  
(Hour) (Place)

As you will remember, our plan is for several families to work together until several mattresses are finished. This may require several days' work.

May I also remind you again of your agreement to furnish \$ 1.65 which covers the cost of the mattress twine for one mattress, also ticking.

Please be on time so we can all begin work together.

Yours very truly,

Mrs. Anton Halmetad

Chairman, Cotton Mattress Center

We have many visitors and correspondents who give us interesting items. Next spring we will print a photo of the 1907 Memorial Day events at the Spirit Cemetery. Bill Nelson from Traverse City, MI gave us that, along with an Indian button with a cross carved in it. Bill and his wife and Elaine Nelson visited us in May. We appreciate these visits and gifts that we receive from so many. Board Members Karen Baumgartner and Luann Lind are accessioning the items we receive.



Look what we have hanging from our loft above the Living Room! This is a quilt made by “The Rhody Girls”—Mary Ellen Zielke, Annette Cullen, Cathy Schlais, Diane Scott and Veronica Lessard. It is a gift to German Settlement History, Inc. It is a reminder of our school days at Liberty School. It is beautiful!

# A Letter from June [Saari] Johnson

June 1, 2015  
Merrill, Wis.

Dear Mike & Toni,

Thank you for the very interesting & enjoyable Liberty School News newsletter. Being I was born & raised “next door” in Brantwood, & when I got married I lived East of Ogema for 43 years, across the road from the Gene Haskins. Therefore many of the faces & places are familiar to me.

I also was a Dr. MacKinnon baby. Perhaps I am in the group photo, as I remember being in Prentice on Doc MacKinnon Day & standing next to a grocery store. (Red & White.) We were transported by school bus to Prentice from Pershing State Graded School in Brantwood for this important event. I do not recall who the bus driver was. I was 7 years old.

My brother Norman who was four years older than I & my sister Darlene (Joanne) were Dr. MacKinnon babies also. Both are deceased. My oldest brother Leroy was also one of Doc’s babies. He lives in Milton, Wis. My mother related to me that Leroy was a big baby & Doc told her that he was almost big enough to walk!

I remember when Darlene was soon to be born. My brothers Leroy, Norman & I were excitedly waiting for Doc to arrive. I don’t think that any of us knew what the birth of a child was about. Back then it was more of a private matter. It was late afternoon when Doc arrived. How he knew when to come to our house, I don’t know. We had no automobile or telephone, so perhaps it traveled from one neighbor to the next until Doc got the message.

My brothers & I were in the living room & the door between the living room & the bedroom was closed, & I’m sure it was locked also because out of curiosity I think that we would have opened it otherwise! Here we were, the 3 of us trying to peek through the keyhole in the hopes of catching a glimpse of what was happening! Soon we heard the baby’s cry, & I guess it wasn’t very long after when we were allowed to go in & meet our baby sister. I just stood by my mom & baby in wonderment & awe! Such a miracle! Doctor Mackinnon was a very special country doctor!!

I am named June per Doctor MacKinnon’s wishes. Mom had the name Beverly Ann picked out for me but Doc said, “I’m not leaving this house until you promise to name her June!” Hence the name, June Beverly Ann [Saari].

A couple of newsletters ago Donna Stolhammer wrote an article entitled Memories of the Church on the Corner. What a beautiful love story! Love for family, Love for relatives & friends, Love for church, school, & community; Respectfulness and gratitude, faith, strength & courage shines through the complete story! Extremely uplifting! I loved reading this story over & over again! Thank you Donna for sharing it with us!

Enjoy the beauty of summer!

Blessings,  
June [Saari] Johnson

P.S. Rod & I enjoyed the Barndance! It’s such a fun & healthy event for people of all ages!



## Edgar Weiland—Liberty School Student and Veteran

We have recently become acquainted with the story of a former student who went on to serve in the military. Edgar Weiland lived in **Our Yesterday House** and attended Liberty School.

Some of his children visited us this summer and fall and passed on his story: “Edgar W. Weiland was born on November 15, 1919, in the Town of Spirit, Price County, WI, son of Arthur and Matilda [Kromrie] Weiland. He served in the Army Corps of the China-Burma-India Theater during World War II. He married Lillian R. Kloth on May 1, 1948, in Medford, WI. He passed away on March 19, 2009.”



**China Burma India Theater** (CBI) was an umbrella term, used by the United States military during World War II for the **China** “and **Southeast Asian** or **India-Burma** (IBT) theaters. The CBI Seal is shown above.

Edgar’s daughters Elaine Kniess and Carol Pastorius along with their brother Francis Weiland gave us Edgar’s military uniform and overcoat from the CBI Theater. They also donated Carol’s Marine Summer Dress Uniform (from 1968) and Francis’ Marine Uniform from 1975.

In addition to the military uniforms the family gave us several banners or scarves from the CBI Theater and other fancy fabric pieces from that era.

Edgar’s name will be added to our roster of Liberty School Military Veterans.

**We always appreciate finding out more about those who lived here and attended Liberty School and our Roster of Veterans is always open to additions. Thanks to Elaine, Carol and Francis for their remembrance of their father and their gifts to German Settlement History, Inc.**

Donna Lind Stolhammer has just published a book called “The Lind Kids.” In it, she shares memories from her siblings and memories of her own. It centers around growing up in Spirit, WI. In the 50’s and 60’s, and what life was like on the farm, in the country school, and in the community. If you would like to check it out we have a copy at Liberty School. You can contact us to borrow it. If you would like your own copy, you can order on line at [dstolhammer@gmail.com](mailto:dstolhammer@gmail.com) and mail a check to Donna Lind Stolhammer at 24282 496<sup>th</sup> St., Bemidji, MN. 56601. The books are \$12. If you want it mailed to you it would be \$15 in order to cover the shipping and wrapping.

Our Annual Meeting for German Settlement History, Inc. will be held here at Liberty School on Sunday, January 24, 2016 beginning at 12:30 p.m. with a potluck lunch followed by the meeting. This meeting will include the election of two Board Members and the election of officers as needed. We urge you to attend!

### **Is GSHI about the PAST or about the FUTURE?**

The correct answer is YES! We are about both the PAST and the FUTURE. In my opinion, however, I think we need to look more and more to the future. Are we engaged in a sustainable effort? Can our preservation of local history and our communication of its value continue for a decade, two decades, a century? I hope so.

Our plan is that GSHI will ultimately take over ownership of all the property and buildings here. We are working toward that end. Your support will help ensure a good future for this organization and the community it serves.

Consider a Legacy Gift to GSHI in your will or as a beneficiary to an investment account. As you do estate planning we invite you to consider the purposes and possibilities that GSHI offers to those who will follow us in the future. Please think about it. As we grow older and fade from the scene we can leave behind something good.

Sincerely,

Michael Meier



4<sup>th</sup> Graders from Rib Lake visited us in May. Docents Karen, Gene and Joan shared history with the youngsters

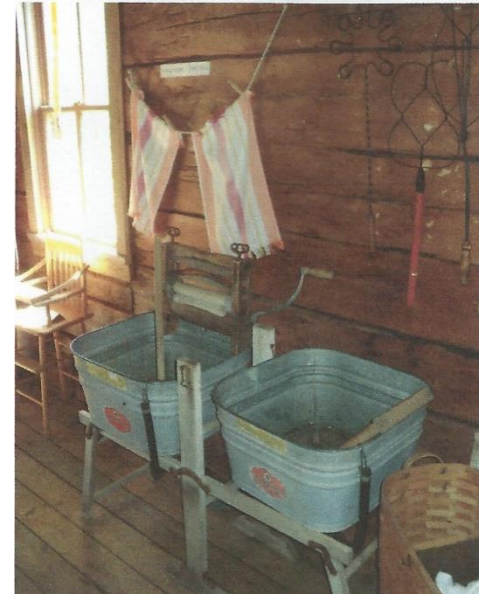


# We had a Picnic in July>>

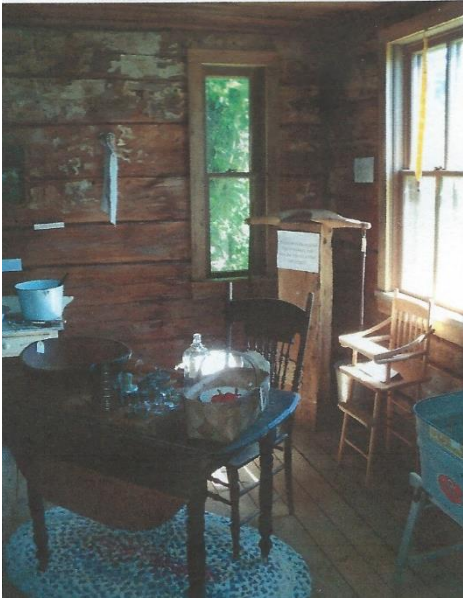




Also, Yesterday House photos by a visitor — Anders Strömbäck, Höganäs, Sweden



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Anders Strömbäck, Höganäs, Sweden took some photos of Our Yesterday House and Liberty School. He wrote to us saying:

“Hello Toni and Michael,

“I got a message from Peg Thomas who told me you would like to get the photos I took at our visit at your German Settlement History on August 1<sup>st</sup>. Sure I am happy to share these photos with you. It was nice to meet you and to see the collections and the work you do to keep the past living. I was also impressed how beautiful remodeled and restored the old school house was. Sincerely, Anders Strömbäck, Höganäs, Sweden



# German Settlement History, Inc. Membership/Gift Form

You are invited to become a member of GSHI. German Settlement History, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization whose mission is to protect, conserve and display buildings, artifacts and documents of historical value for educational purposes. Members are persons who contribute \$25.00 or more at any time during the year. Membership continues through the month of January the following year. As a member of GSHI you will be contributing to our mission, receive the Liberty School News and will be eligible to vote in person or by absentee ballot at the GSHI January Annual Meeting.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Amount \_\_\_\_\_ Membership Year \_\_\_\_\_

## Categories: Please check one

- **Swamper (non-member)--\$1.00 to \$24.00 per year** \_\_\_\_\_

## The following categories qualify you as a Member:

- **Sawyer--\$25.00 to \$49.00 per year** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Teamster--\$50.00 to \$99.00 per year** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Woods Boss--\$100.00 to \$499.00 per year** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Homesteader--\$500.00 to \$999.00 per year** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Settlement Builder--\$1000 or more per year** \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Non-Membership gift** \_\_\_\_\_

## Please make checks payable to GSHI and mail to:

German Settlement History, Inc.  
N894 S. German Settlement Road  
Ogema, WI 54459

Telephone: 715-564-3299 Email: [gshinc@centurylink.net](mailto:gshinc@centurylink.net) Web: [germansettlementhistory.org](http://germansettlementhistory.org)

Consider a **Legacy Gift**, a contribution to the long-term mission of GSHI.

Your accountant, banker, investment advisor or insurance agent may be able to help you with a will, a power of attorney and a medical directive. When you discuss these matters you may also want to discuss how you can contribute to the long-term Endowment Fund of GSHI. This Fund is intended to preserve the land and the buildings of GSHI so that our mission can continue on into the future.

- **Send me more information on Legacy Gifts to GSHI** \_\_\_\_\_

## Book Order Form

Please make check or money order payable to German Settlement History, Inc.  
 Mail to: German Settlement History, Inc., N894 S. German Settlement Road,  
 Ogema, WI 54459

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Here is an order form for books that have been written by folks right here in The German Settlement. We have had several volumes reprinted and/or rebound and now have a sufficient supply of each of these titles. We think these books give an accurate flavor of life and people here from 1880-1950. You can order them by mail or stop by and pick them up.

Name of Book	Price Each	Quantity	Total
The "Never Miss a Sunset" Pioneer Family Series by Jeanette Gilge			
A Winter's Promise	\$5.00	_____	_____
Never Miss a Sunset	\$5.00	_____	_____
All Things Heal in Time	\$5.00	_____	_____
Best of Intentions	\$5.00	_____	_____
Satin in the Snow	\$5.00	_____	_____
As Long As I Have You	\$5.00	_____	_____
<b>Full set of all six books</b>	<b>\$20.00</b>	_____	_____
Also by Jeanette Gilge:			
City-Kid Farmer	\$5.00	_____	_____
Growing Up Summer	(no longer available)	_____	_____
The "Saga of Spirit Valley" Series by Carl Rhody			
The Saga of Spirit Valley	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley II	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley III	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley IV	\$7.50	_____	_____
The Saga of Spirit Valley V	\$7.50	_____	_____
<b>Full set of all five books</b>	<b>\$35.00</b>	_____	_____
Also by Carl Rhody:			
Spirit Falls Logging Boom Town	\$7.50	_____	_____
Books by James Rhody:			
The Pleasure of the Sorrow	\$5.00	_____	_____
Brant's Bear	\$10.00	_____	_____
German Settlement History Booklet	\$2.00	_____	_____
			<b>Merchandise Total</b>
Shipping:	Orders for \$10.00 and under please add \$3.50		_____
	Orders over \$10.00 please add \$7.50		_____
			<b>Total Order</b>
			_____