

Spirit Historical Society Newsletter

April 2025 Vol. 7 No. 1

Sharing historical information from Spirit, Hill, Knox and the Spirit Valley area for your enjoyment.



Join us for our Annual Barn Dance

Sunday May 25th

7 p.m. to midnight

A donation gets you into the dance.

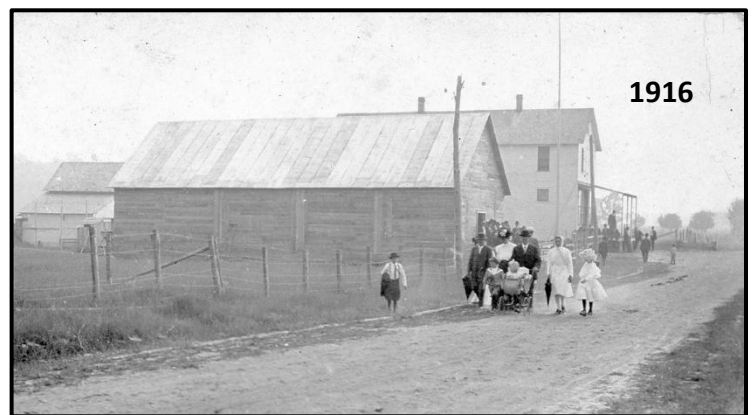
Flag raising takes place at 8 p.m.
Refreshments served after that.

Darrel & Luann Lind farm
N1169 German Settlement Rd.
In Spirit, WI



Chances will be sold for new & crafted items.

Memories of the annual trek from the old Spirit Store and Koch's Hall to Spirit Hillcrest Cemetery on Memorial Day. Remember to take time this year to honor the veterans from your community. Join us for the annual trek starting at the Spirit Town Hall.



Last chance to give a donation to help us finish the Machine Shed project. Anyone giving \$200 and up will have their name put on a plaque. Anyone giving \$500 or more will have their name in a separate category on the plaque. Any amount of donations is appreciated! A big thank you to all of you that have donated so far. We are well on our way to paying for the whole shed.

Spirit Historical Society, 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 S.H.S.I. you will be contributing to our mission, receive our newsletters and will be eligible to vote in person or by absentee ballot at the S.H.S.I. January annual meeting.

Community Events

Our next **SHSI meeting** is scheduled for June 7th at the Spirit Town Hall at 10:30 am. Let us know if you would like to participate (spirithistoricalsociety@gmail.com) we will send you the link ahead of time for online viewing. Everyone is welcome to join us or contact us with your input.

Current Board Members:

Luann Lind-Pres., JaNelle Nelson-V.Pres., Maryalice McHugh-Sec., Loren Erickson-Treas., Cheryl Pierson, Johanna Holliday, Anne Marie Fries, Dean Gilge, Mark Nyberg, Dan Erickson & Linda Nelson

Annual Spring **Pancake Supper** will be sponsored by Spirit Legion Post 452 and the American Legion Auxiliary. Everyone is welcome to attend.



It will take place at the Spirit Town Hall on Saturday, April 26, 2025 from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m.

Memorial Day Cemetery Services Monday May 27th:

Spirit Legion Post 452 will be rendering honors

at the following cemeteries:

Finlander – 8:15 am

Clifford – 8:35 am

St. Mary's – 8:55 am

Knox – 9:15 am

Garden of Memories – 10:00 am

Levitt Creek – 10:30 am

Ogema Hillside – 11:00 am

Spirit Auxiliary will be serving lunch at the Spirit Town Hall from 11:30 – 12:45. A program will follow in the upstairs of the Town Hall at 1:00 pm. Following the program will be a march to Spirit Hillcrest Cemetery for the honors there.



The 82nd annual **Spirit-Hill-Ogema 4-H Fair** will be held Sat., Aug. 16th at the Spirit Town Hall.

Participating 4-H clubs: Happy Hoboes, Hillbillies, Restless Rascals & Hamburg Hawks

Fair Board Members: Darrel Lind-Pres., Ed Ulrich-V.Pres., Check out the fair at

Molly Lind, & Colleen Schult-Sec./Treas.

www.facebook.com/spirithillogema4hfair



Spirit Town Board meetings are held in the Spirit Town Hall on the 2nd Tues. of each month, starting at 6:00 pm.

Town board members are: Darrel Lind, Gary Siebert and Dean Johnson

Clerk – JaNelle Nelson Treas. – Myrna Holmquist

Spirit Legion Post 452 and the American Legion Auxiliary hold their monthly meetings on the 2nd Thurs. of each month at the Spirit Town Hall beginning at 7 pm.

Spirit Historical Society Newsletter is published by Spirit Historical Society, Inc.

Tours of Our Yesterday House will be available again this summer. Visit us on Facebook, email: spirithistoricalsociety@gmail.com, or visit our website spirithistoricalsociety.org.

A special thank you for the Memorials given in the name of Marilyn Erickson.

Obituaries



James Andrew Marheine, 87, of Brantwood, WI passed away Saturday, December 14, 2024 surrounded by his family in his childhood home. James was born October 9, 1937 in his grandparents' home east of Tripoli, Wisconsin. His father and mother, Mr. Benjamin and Lillian (Hendrickson) Marheine took over the family farm from his father's parents Fred and Louisa Marheine. He was raised with his three brothers and three sisters. Jim worked on the farm and logged for his father along with his brothers Ben and Clarence. The three brothers all joined the National Guard and served four years at Fort Lewis, Washington. Upon returning, Jim worked in Illinois operating loader trucks to remove the elm trees that died from Dutch elm disease. Afterwards, he entered a partnership with his friend, Jim Mueller, running Jim & Jim's Bar. Jim married his wife, Ann Willfahrt on August 15, 1970 and raised two sons and two daughters. They lived together in Brantwood, Wisconsin. Jim raised Hereford cattle with his brother Ben and his father. Later he took over the operation on his own. He enjoyed gardening and took pride in growing tomatoes that he shared with family and friends. Jim drove logging trucks for many years, known to his fellow truckers as the Square Deal. He then took a job with the Town of Knox maintaining the roads for 20 plus years until he retired. Jim took his family on numerous camping trips to the Willow Flowage throughout his lifetime. He taught his kids to fish, hunt, and respect the land. He always put family first and he will be dearly missed.

Surviving are his wife of 54 years, Ann Marheine; daughters, Jennifer (Craig) Cummings, and Salina Marheine; son, James (Emily) Marheine; five grandchildren, Andrew, Kimberly, Jesse, Henry, and Lillianna; one great-grandchild, Maddie; sisters, Nancy (Otto) Vyskocil, and Judy (Donald) Morin; brothers, Clarence "Tuffy" Marheine, and Dennis (Sue) Marheine. He was preceded in death by his parents; son, Jesse Marheine; sister, Kathleen (Joseph) Conlan; brother, Benjamin Marheine.

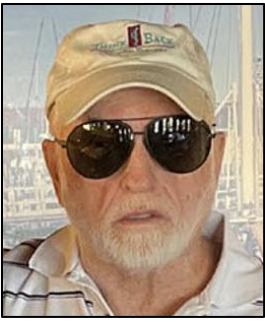


Marcy Joann (Nyberg) Mattson, age 61 lost her courageous battle with metastatic breast cancer in Denver, Colorado on December 14, 2024. Marcy lived in and around the Denver area most of her adult life with her family and husband Steve of 27 years. Throughout her life Marcy remained close in her heart to her surviving children and their spouses Joshua (Brei Ann), Brianna (Tom) and Andrew (Kelsey). She was preceded in death by her parents Stewart and Joanna (Manninen), Step-Mom Jean Nyberg, youngest son Jacob and Jacob and Andrew's dad Keith. Marcy loved her growing family dearly and was

especially fond of her five grandchildren; Emilia, Paul, Jake, Sophia and Gunner. Marcy always looked forward to going home and spending time with her siblings and their families; Russel (Cathy) Nyberg, John Nyberg, Lisa (Bart) Smith, Nicole (Jody) Scheller and Jeffrey Nyberg. Additionally, Marcy is survived by her brother and sister-in-law Brian and Kristy Melodia as well as many close relatives and friends.

Marcy began her life's journey on July 23, 1963 in West Alice, WI and spent the majority of her childhood living in the Spirit area. She enjoyed roller skating at the Spirit Town Hall, learning to cook family meals on a wood stove and participating in many school activities. Marcy graduated from Prentice High School in 1981 and attributed her immaculate hand writing to Daisy Palmquist, an early teacher and mentor.

Following High School Marcy attended beauty school, settling in Colorado where she raised her family along with her husband Steve. In her early 30's she became a Medical Assistant working in a variety of clinical and private practice settings. In her free time Marcy had an adventurous spirit and loved to travel and explore unique and interesting places throughout the U.S., Canada, Mexico and Europe.



Lynn Charles Scheller, born on May 25, 1944, in Tomahawk, Wisconsin passed peacefully on November 18, 2024, at his residence in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Lynn is survived by Susie Scheller, many family members in Wisconsin and some good friends.

Lynn dedicated his life to the field of engineering, working for The State of New Mexico and Sandia National Laboratory. He loved photography, New Mexico, Thailand, travelling and a passion for history.



Shirley A. Andreae, age 84, of Ogema, WI, passed away on Friday, January 10, 2025, at Rib Lake Health Services, under the care of Hope Hospice & North Shore Healthcare. Shirley was born in Rib Lake, WI, on December 2, 1940, to the late Louis and Alice (Gauthier) Heiser. She grew up in the Spirit Lake area where she attended the Ward School until 6th grade and then continued on in Rib Lake. After high school, Shirley worked at the local mink ranches. On April 18, 1959, she married Arthur James Andreae. They lived in Merrill, WI, for a short time. Arthur and Shirley moved back to the Spirit Lake to raise their three girls. She enjoyed quilt making, gardening, and cooking, and especially loved spending time with her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

Survivors include her daughters, Debra (Leonard) Sommer, of Ogema, WI, Diana (James) Marshall, of Rib Lake, WI, and Donna Crapeau, of Phillips, WI; and her grandchildren, Chad Sommer, Jesse Sommer, Nicole Sommer, Crystal (Kyle) Zickert, Tracy (Keith) Cota, James Marshall, Richard Crapeau, Patti Crapeau, David Crapeau, and Sara (Jordan) Janak. She is further survived by her 26 great-grandchildren and her great-great-grandchild.



Pearl E. Kauer, age 80, of Rib Lake, WI, passed away on Wednesday, February 12, 2025, at her home. Pearl was born in Tomahawk, WI, on April 10, 1944, to the late Albert and Wanda "Jane" (Fickel) Johnson. She was married to Ben Kauer on June 13, 1970, at St. John Catholic Church in Rib Lake; he survives. Pearl was a 1962 graduate of the Rib Lake High School. After graduation, she moved to Indianapolis, IN, where she worked briefly before moving to Milwaukee, WI, working as a bookkeeper for Lake Shore Finance. In 1980, she returned to Rib Lake. Pearl took some time off to raise her children and then began her 20-year career working as a cashier at the Rib Lake IGA. Pearl volunteered her time at Good Shepherd Catholic Church and at the Rib Lake School District. She remained involved in

various community events which included being a secretary for the fire commission, was on the board of directors for the Rib Lake Library, and was very active with the Women's Auxiliary in Spirit. She was an avid reader and enjoyed puzzles. Above all, Pearl loved spending time with her family.

Survivors include her husband, Ben Kauer, of Rib Lake, WI; her sons, Jack (Tammy Bortz) Kauer, of Rib Lake, WI, and Neil (Darlene) Kauer, of Rib Lake, WI; her daughter, Marijane (Jason) Viergutz, of Dorchester, WI; her brother-in-law, Ron (Mary) Kauer, of Rib Lake, WI; and her sisters-in-law, Dorene Johnson, of Ogema, WI, Mary Ann (Ray) Schlosser, of Rib Lake, WI, and Colette (Dave) Froehlich, of Rhinelander, WI. Pearl is further survived by her grandchildren, Riley and Madeline Viergutz, in addition to numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, Albert and Jane; her brothers, Joseph Johnson and Wayne Johnson; and her brother-in-law and sister-in-law, Jim and Betty Kauer.



Mary "Mary Jo" Josephine Ulrich, 68, of Ogema, WI passed away unexpectedly on January 20, 2025. Mary Jo was born on December 7, 1956, in Madison, WI, to parents John and Verlene "Lee" (Cayo) Bernd. She grew up in Stevens Point, where she graduated from SPASH in 1975. After graduating, she worked for Sentry Insurance, which moved her to Phoenix, AZ and then to Atlanta, GA. It was in Atlanta that she was introduced over the phone to her best friend and love of her life, Ed Ulrich. Continued >>

Mary Jo Ulrich continued:

She moved to Ogema to be with him. Ed and Mary Jo were married on a beautiful spring day in April 1990, at the Ogema Baptist Church.

Mary Jo was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother. She loved spending time with her family and friends and going camping. Mary Jo enjoyed being active in her community. When her daughter started elementary school, Mary Jo started volunteering at the Ogema Elementary School. She also served as treasurer for the Ogema Our Town Committee and enjoyed volunteering with the Hillbillies 4-H club. Mary Jo held various administrative and cooking jobs- most recently she was cooking at Rail Trail Café and worked in the office for her step-son Curt at Bypass Communications.

Mary Jo is survived by her husband, Ed; her stepsons Chad Ulrich of Ogema, Curt Ulrich of Phillips, Cale Ulrich of Tomahawk and her daughter Allyson Jablonsky of Ham Lake, MN; grandchildren Caelyn Ulrich, Avery Ulrich, Endora Udovich-Ulrich, Gabby Ulrich, Jackson Jablonsky, and Jace Jablonsky; and brother John (Sharon) Bernd of Bethlehem, GA, and nephews Johnny (Amelia) Bernd and Ramon (Meghan) Bernd.

She is preceded in death by her parents, John and Lee (Cayo) Bernd.



Report To South Fork Spirit River Group

This project was planned in 1968-69 but never accomplished.

This report has been prepared at the request of the Spirit River Group to provide the group, in one document, some biology, engineering and economic information to assist them in making a decision regarding a proposed flowage.

The proposed flowage would be created by impounding the South Fork of the Spirit River about two miles downstream from Spirit Lake. At present, the area between the proposed damsite and Spirit Lake appears to be mostly under low intensity management for forestry, wildlife and recreation. The main topographic feature of the area is the deep and narrow stream valley and its border of relatively high land on either side. The river falls about sixty-two (62) feet from Spirit Lake to a point beneath the first road crossing downstream, a straight line distance of about two and one-half (2.5) miles. The valley walls near the damsite appear to be high enough to allow for the efficient creation of a flowage with various water depths as great as other conditions might allow.

The South Fork of the Spirit River is listed by the State of Wisconsin as a Class II trout stream between points about one and four miles below Spirit Lake. Downstream the Spirit River enters Lincoln County and is classified as either Class I or Class II trout stream for the next 9.6 miles. In the primary impact zone 1, the river has relatively poor conditions for trout. Slow water, probable poor temperature conditions, sand and silt reverbed, and low beaver dams combine to create less than favorable conditions for trout. Below Johnson Creek (north) in the secondary impact zone 2, the gradient improves, base flow is probably more dependable and types of river bed are more favorable for trout.

Several small tributary streams enter the impact zones and the larger of these is probably somewhat significant to the reproduction of trout. Johnson Creek (north) had small trout redds in November, 1967. Creation of a flowage would probably isolate the tributaries from the trout stream below.

The impact zone was judged to have good habitat value for deer, ruffed grouse, woodcock, duck and general wildlife species. Recreational use of the impact zone is probably very low at present. General recreation use is limited by the availability of much similar habitat in the region, the low level of human population and poor accessibility of the impact zone.

From a fish, wildlife and recreational aspect the river and impact zone have good natural potential for management as a natural fishing, hunting, hiking and winter sports area as well as for artificial lakes and associated recreation. An artificial lake of value for recreation might range from a shallow waterfowl lake to a very deep all purpose recreational pool, depending on group desire, finances and other resource considerations.

Meet Board Member Mark Nyberg



I am Mark Nyberg, a 6th generation resident of Spirit. My great-great-great grandfather, Isaac Stone, settled here in 1868 with his wife Elizabeth (a member of the Lac du Flambeau tribe) and their three children. He is considered the first white settler in Price County. Isaac came here to harvest the virgin forests and established a camp near Stone Lake. Eventually his son Langley married Annie Marheine, one of the eight children of Frederick and Henrietta Marheine. Many of them married locally, making me related to many families, such as the Krings, Meiers, Schellers, Rhodys, and Carlsons.

My great grandpa John Nyberg moved here and married Langley's daughter Annie. They built and operated the Nyberg Farm on Cty. Hwy. D, which is still operated by my uncles Mike and Brian. They raised seven children, until John passed away. Annie then remarried Gust Nyberg (no relative) and they moved to a new farm on River Road. The Nyberg Farm was left to my grandpa Clarence and his brother Leonard (still boys at the time). Grandpa met and married Eveline Pfalzgraf, from Spirit Falls. For many years I was related to most of Spirit Falls. They raised five children, the oldest being my dad, Rodger.



Grandma Annie Nyberg born May 18, 1886, with her grandparents Frederick & Henrietta Marheine who raised her. Annie's mother Annie (Marheine) Stone had died when she was a baby.

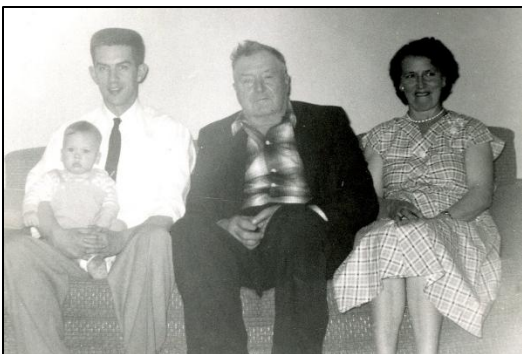


Great Grandparents Annie & John Nyberg and family with great aunt Nannie(left). Leonard – boy on left. Clarence – boy on right.



Clarence & Eveline (Mark's grandparents)
Rodger (Mark's Dad) & brother Stewart

Dad decided that he had a future in education and attended Taylor County Teacher's College and eventually Stevens Point University. His first job was at Wilson School. Eventually he would also teach at the Teacher's College, Rib Lake and Phillips until his retirement. One of dad's most exciting days was when he met Beryl Lofquist, from Ogema. They married and raised me and my three siblings on our farm in Spirit. We raised cattle while dad taught. Mom stayed at home with us, but eventually was known to many around the area as the Tupperware Lady.



1960 4 generations: Mark, Rodger, William Pfalzgraf & Eveline Nyberg



Nyberg cousins: Steve, Mic, Allen, Brian, Mark, Bruce & Beth



Siblings:
Mark,
Bruce,
Beth &
Shelly

I started my education at Wilson School, then Tripoli and graduated from Prentice in 1977. In high school I played football, basketball, and baseball. I had the opportunity to go to the basketball State Tournament. I attended UW LaCrosse and had a number of jobs including at Black River Industries and the Medford School District for the last 15 years, as a substitute teacher. I bought and lived for 30 years in the house on the corner of River Road and Hwy 86. The house was built by Edgar Johnson. After mom passed away, I sold the house and moved across the road, into the family house. I'm now retired, but continue to run Nyberg Tree Farm, which dad started as his retirement project. The house is the family place, where friends and family are always welcome. Spirit has been my home for all these years and hopefully for many more.



Mark – 3rd from left with the Nyberg hunting crew.



1972 Mark – center front with the Spirit fast pitch softball team.



SHSI recently acquired a very interesting donation from Ed Scheller. Ed's Great Grandpa was in the war in Germany as a gunner. The items were unfamiliar to Ed, but after researching them we were able to identify what they are and their use.

Caltrops were used extensively and effectively during World War II. The purpose of these devices was to disable horses. It is possible that its earliest recorded use occurred in Persia, 331 B.C.

Under a wide variety of names, the caltrop appears and reappears in military history throughout Europe, Asia and North Africa, and eventually in the New World. The original caltrop was nothing more than a ball from which four spikes projected in such a way that when three spikes were on the ground the fourth was always pointed upward. To step on it was to risk a laceration or puncture wound. Caltrops were tossed and spread at the location of a target and over a large area. Since caltrops were small weapons, advancing armies could not detect their presence until it was too late. They were a cruel weapon that injured horses feet and were very effective in halting cavalry.

In artillery, a grapeshot is a type of ammunition that consists of a collection of smaller-caliber round shots packed tightly in a canvas bag and separated from the gunpowder charge by a metal wadding, rather than being a single



solid projectile. When assembled, the shot resembled a cluster of grapes, hence the name. Grapeshot was used both on land and at sea. On firing the cannon, the canvas wrapping disintegrates and the contained balls scatter out from the muzzle, giving a ballistic effect similar to a giant shotgun. Typical Civil War grape shot was as large as 4.5 inches.

The Oil-Stove Literary Society by Dan Seger

Literacy was a family affair in my wife Claire's childhood. It started with her mother. Grandma Rose, as she is now known, was widowed soon after Claire was born, but she chose to stay on the Johnson place in Spirit, Wisconsin, and raise her four young children herself. In spite of the demands of single parenthood, Rose always found time to read. In this way she demonstrated a personal value that all four of her children could see. In addition, she found the time to share it directly with her children. The atmosphere of Rose's house simply said that reading is something that people do. It's natural, it's fun, and it's worth making time for.

Spirit is a rural town that sits in the "Big Woods" of northern Wisconsin, a hundred or so miles northeast of where Laura Ingalls Wilder lived as a young girl. Two houses, an immense dairy barn, some outbuildings, and hayfields comprised the Johnson place. All around, the hardwood and evergreen forest pressed in as if wanting to breach the small stone fences lining the hayfields and reclaim the farm as its own. Winters were harsh, and the snow piled deep in Spirit, but in the Johnson farmhouse the old oil stove kept the chill away and provided the earliest literate environment that Claire remembers.

The oil stove sat out from the wall just far enough for two or maybe three kids to sit behind. Important learning took place there. One time, second oldest brother Terry and third oldest Everett emerged from an intense session with satisfied expressions on their faces. Terry announced, "Well, Everett can swear now. I taught him!"

Claire remembers more literary learning, too. Despite the lack of extra money, books were available. A family friend, a retired teacher, from Milwaukee, had sent a box of books that were the source of many hours of pleasure and sharing. Since Rose didn't drive and Spirit had no real village center, these books became important recreation for the Johnson Children. Claire recalls sitting behind the warm stove with Everett, heads bent over books. She doesn't remember exactly when she was first able to read by herself. It seems more like a gradual emergence of understanding that passed from brother to sister so that by the time she was five years old, she was able to read many of these books by herself. She was such a precocious reader that adult friends would sometimes turn two pages at once just to see whether she was 'really reading' or just repeating from memory. She showed them.

When Claire reached school age she spent her first two and a half years at the Spirit Falls School, a one-room school for first through eighth grades. She and two other children make up the first grade. She found a much different environment there. Miss Redmond spent little time with the younger students in the school, neither did she read aloud to the classes. Claire doesn't remember many 'lessons' with the teacher. Instead, the younger ones were given reading books and workbooks that they were to read and complete without much guidance. Claire remembers the workbooks more than the readers, probably because the workbooks were sometimes puzzling to her. Though she already knew that she was a reader, she was surprised and a little dismayed when something in the workbook was confusing or hard to understand. Without much teacher contact she learned to solve these reading workbook problems on her own. Claire's first school experience taught her that she could figure problems out, and that choice was not always a shared agenda as it had been at home. She doesn't remember reading books or stories in school, but she does remember—the workbooks.

In fact the place that Claire remembers ‘really reading’ during these two and a half years is at home. The family, with some advanced planning with friends who drove, did make regular trips to the Tomahawk town library. This expanded the literature repertoire beyond the familiar books at home. Claire discovered the “*Flikka, Rikka, and Dikka*” stories there. Rose also began a subscription to Jack and Jill Magazine, with its serialized stories carried over month to month. These were all added to the oil-stove sessions. They had a medicinal purpose, too. School years bring a host of childhood diseases, and in Claire’s family listening to stories helped to get over them. Claire pictures Everett and herself on the big bed, spotted with measles, wondering what would become of Bambi after the death of his mother. Carrying these concerns over until the next day and the next chapter seemed to make the spots disappear sooner.

Before third grade was over, Rose moved her family into the nearby town of Rib Lake. With close to eight hundred residents, the town seemed big compared to the farm. The school was big enough to have different rooms for different grade levels. Mrs. Everson, the third-grade teacher, spent more time on reading than had Miss Redmond at Spirit Falls. There was, however, still a reading book to use. Claire doesn’t remember the title of it, only that it was red and thicker than readers she had used before. Reading activities were more varied as Mrs. Everson read to the class and planned choral and other dramatic readings with assigned parts. The specific stories are indistinct for Claire, but at least this time reading was remembered more than the workbooks.

Rib Lake had a town library, and it was only a block away from Claire’s house. Her fourth and fifth grade years found her a regular customer. She met the *Hardy Boys* during this time and also learned about teen romance books from her teenaged sister, Laurie. She had seen Laurie reading and enjoying them, but the revelation was that Laurie got them from the same library that Claire had found the *Hardy Boys* in. Another eyeopener was the discovery of non-fiction, photo-journalism books on racial issues. Thus far Claire had been mainly a fiction reader. With these books she could now see beyond the limits of her own experience and into the lives of others. For the first time she saw and read about the way rural black people lived and the injustices heaped upon them.

During Claire’s seventh grade year her Girl Scout troop traveled to New York City and to Washington, D.C. The trip itself broadened horizons, but there was a reading benefit as well. When the troop was home again, Starr Powers, the troop leader, wrote an article about the venture that was published in the national journal for Girl Scouting. For Claire, this helped her learn that people, even familiar people that you saw every day, wrote the words that affect others’ lives. The distance between writer and reader was shortened.

Later school experiences brought the inevitable sentence diagramming in eighth grade and *Julius Caesar* in high school. Being a fast and fluent reader made the diagramming more of a mapping activity for Claire. She approached it as if it were a puzzle to solve. While she doesn’t see diagramming as helping her reading, it was a diversion from other mundane tasks. The language and vocabulary of Caesar challenged her but the teacher may have been a more interesting subject. “Babe” Stellick taught English and Spanish, but loved hunting and fishing more. She preceded discussions with generous helpings of hunting and fishing lore that put *Julious Caesar* clearly in second place.

It was again at home that the real reading was happening. When Claire was fifteen, Rose remarried. This meant another move within town, but more than that it meant new relationships. Claire handled the adjustment through reading—not in the sense of bibliotherapy, but more along the lines of biblio-frenzy. She had books everywhere, one at school, another at home—downstairs, a different one upstairs. Nearly anywhere she found herself she could reach a book and continue reading a story. Her friends wondered how she could keep all of the stories straight. But for Claire it was easy, and perhaps in some way it helped her accommodate the new situation in her life.

Claire still reads anything in sight and can be compulsive about it if the timing is right. One night during our first year of marriage I awoke because the bedroom light was on. I sat up thinking there must be an emergency. It was only Claire, at three in the morning, unable to put down the book she was reading. I went back to sleep, she finished the book. Comparing notes with other spouses of Johnson kids, I have found that we share similar experiences. We have married into the Oil-Stove Literary Society, and it's up to us to learn to live with it. The beauty is that it is not a closed group, others are welcome.

Most of Claire's influences on her reading came from outside school, the earliest and strongest being the example set by Grandma Rose. Her school reading instruction was undistinguished, and in the early years could have even been counterproductive. Had Claire not considered herself a reader before she reached first grade those puzzling workbook pages could have been terrors. But it was Grandma Rose and an old oil stove who formed those earliest reading memories with welcoming warmth. Those memories were invitations to join in, not to avoid.

The last time I saw the house on the Johnson place it looked like it could be mistaken for any other deserted old farmhouse, graying clapboards with flecks of old white paint clinging in streaks, the porch now crooked with age, dark windows, some still with glass, staring blankly at cars passing by on the county road. I walked up to it and looked in a window. Wallpaper peeled from flaking plaster, and the floors sagged warning of weakness from too many years of disuse. I didn't go in. Instead, I pictured it as a living house with two young towheads side by side, behind the stove, heads bent over a book

"That word is 'sometimes,'" "Really?" "Yeah." "It's a big word...."

Article
printed in
Phillips, Wi
in 1959 or
1960.

PHILLIPS, WISCONSIN

Ogema Telephone Switches to Dial

Cut-over of the Ogema Telephone Co. to dial operation took place at noon on Saturday, May 7. This cut-over made it possible for connections to the Prentice station, and between most of those having dial telephones.

Some of the local lines of the exchange have been in operation for several weeks, with the first call being made by Quentin Stevens, one of the owners, to Mrs. Eva Rae Berg, board operator, in April.

There are 355 telephones in the Ogema system, with several more planned for installation. The number system is with two letters and five numbers and is set up to hook in with the Bell system.

The work of converting to dial operations has taken several months, and has involved considerable planning and construction. The 130 miles of line have been replaced; new telephones have been installed for all subscribers and new poles have been erected, so the system is completely new.

A building to house the dial equipment, 20 ft. by 26 ft., has been built of concrete block and is adjoining to the old telephone exchange. Lines have been extended in several localities and further extensions are planned.

Some lines have not been switched over at present but will be as soon as possible. All service calls will now go through the station at Prentice.

The construction has been an REA project. The outside construction and telephone installation contract was handled by the Mullen Construction Co., of Appleton, and the central office equipment installation was by the Automatic Electric Co., Chicago.

A special installation has been made in the Spirit area where an electronic carrier system has been installed. Here nine different circuits can be handled on one pair of wires.

The owners of the telephone company are Mr. and Mrs. W. D. Stevens and their son, Quentin. The Stevens family has been in the telephone business at Ogema for 37 years and they have seen the growth from a few phones and a few miles of line, to the present operations which are expected to continue to expand in the years ahead. Much of the actual board work has been done by members of the family throughout the years of operation, with service given on a 24-hour basis.

One of the improvements to be made, as soon as possible, is to move the cables on the main street of Ogema into the alleys behind the buildings. Although there are a lot of snags which may have to be ironed out as the new operations start, it is hoped that the operations will be on a smooth keel within a few weeks.

Spirit Historical Society, Inc.

Membership Application

You are invited to become a member of S.H.S.I. and vote at our annual meeting in January



Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email Address _____
Phone _____
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

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