

# The Iola Historical Society's Window

Quarterly Member and Activities Newsletter

Volume Two

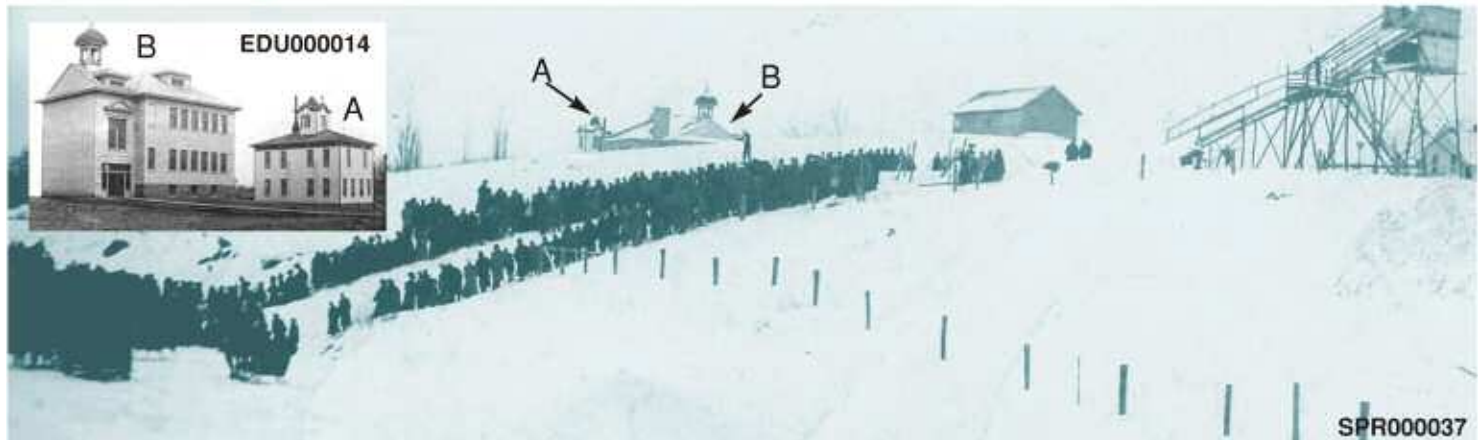
Number One

Winter 2009



## When Ski Hills Abounded

Today only one ski hill remains in the Iola area and that is Norseman Ski Hill located northwest of Iola on MM, but over the years and especially in the early to mid-1900's there were numerous ski hills located in the Iola, Scandinavia, Nelsonville and Peru area. According to the news commentaries in the *Iola Herald* in the early 1900's, many of the tournaments were scheduled only a week or two in advance, and sometimes there were several tournaments on the same weekend. Even then they still had several hundred to several thousand spectators show up to watch the skiers. The following histories of the ski hills, or tournaments, are not complete but brief



outlines of when, where, and sometimes how and why they were built, thus creating a time line of when the tournaments started. Items copied word for word from the *Iola Herald* coverage are printed in italics and captured in quotation marks.

### IOLA: Iola Ski Hill - SPR000037 (School House Ski Hill)

The first Ski Hill in Iola was built in 1909. In the February 25, 1909, edition of the *Iola Herald* a paragraph reads as follows; *"If the weather is favorable some ski practice will be engaged in next Sunday on the hill in the rear of the school buildings. It is too late in the sea-*

*son for the erection of scaffolding to increase the height of the hill, but if all works well, this will be arranged for another season."* One week later in the March 4, 1909, issue the following entry is found; *"The first ski jumping to take place in Iola was had on Sunday on the hill in the rear of the school buildings. A start was made from the roof of Jas. Parker's barn roof and Albert Johnson, Elf Elfson, Oscar and Andrew Walstad made jumps varying from 40 to 42 feet. Several of the youngsters did very good work. If the weather is cold enough another trial will be made next Sunday."* The scaffold was built west of the current Iola Fire Station, probably just to the west of the heliport. When they built the scaffold it apparently was not

tall enough or steep enough to create enough speed to jump, so they build a second platform directly over the first platform which can be seen on the photograph. The two buildings to the left of the scaffold are the school buildings that are referred to in the story. They were the first Grade School and first High School in Iola. (See insert EDU000014) Arrow A points to the bell tower of the grade school and arrow B points the high school. The barn just to the left of the scaffold may be Parker's barn, as referred to in the newspaper story. To the right of the scaffold is possibly the house currently located at 390 West Iola Street, which may have been Parker's

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## President's Corner

I want to thank all the members for your trust and re-electing me president for a second term. I am going keep the "President's Corner" short this time because we have so many stories we need to get in to this issue. I just want to remind the members that I am challenging each member to get one new member in 2009. Thanks to all the members who helped during our Wednesday work days, and also the Iola Lions Club for their work night.

Our next goal on remodeling 210 Depot St. is raising \$7,000 so we can paint the ceiling and walls and install a durable epoxy floor put in place. After this is complete we can start work on the reference library and a Military exhibit.  
*Lyle*



Acting on behalf of the Waupaca County Passport to History program, Iola Historical Society president Lyle Mork presents a \$100 U.S. Savings Bond to Mrs. Deanna Stinemat of Waupaca. Mrs. Stinemat was the lucky winner of a drawing among Waupaca County historical site visitors during the summer of 2008 who completed the obtaining of "visa" stamps on their passports by visiting seven different locations.

### The Iola Historical Society 210 Depot Street • P.O. Box 412 • Iola, WI 54945

#### Officers:

Lyle Mork, President (715) 445-5795  
Stella Strand, Vice-President (715) 445-3184  
Chris Ross, Secretary (715) 445-2302  
Tom Fucik, Treasurer (715) 281-1032

#### Board of Directors

Cliff Mishler, Robert Stamsted, Doug Watson  
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Phone: (715) 445-IOLA (4652)



Chet Krause looks on as artist Gordon Olson unveils a portrait he created picturing Chet sitting at his library table examining coins from his collection.

## Society Christmas Party a Big Hit With Guests and Members

The Iola Historical Society held its second annual Christmas Party at the Millstone in Iola, on Monday evening December 15, at 5:00 p.m. About forty members and guests enjoyed a potluck dinner. After the meal, members and guests were treated to a visit from a Norwegian "immigrant," Mrs. Anne Kristiansdatter Skogen-Hellestad who came to the United States in 1844 at the age of 24. She first settled in the Mequon area near Milwaukee where she met and married Ole Olson. They moved north to Hartford in 1846, and finally in 1864 she and her husband traveled north to what was called the Indian Lands, settling just south of Scandinavia. Because there were too many Ole Olson's in the area they changed their name to Hellestad after a farm in Norway. Ole passed away in 1873, Anne died in 1878.

One of their sons, John Christian, took over the farm and ran it until his death in 1911. John's son Henry Hellestad ran the farm until 1958 at which time the farm was sold to the Peterson family. The Petersons sold Hellestad cabin to Henry Schulke in

1966, who in turn sold it to Raleigh Hueber in 1972. The cabin was sold once again, this time to "Hard Rock" Henderson. In 1997 the cabin was purchased by Bob and Christine Faulks at auction, who later donated it to the Hartman Creek State Park, where it has been restored and is open to the public.

Sue Eiler, President of Friends of



Sue Eiler is shown portraying Anne Kristiansdatter Skogen at the Societies Christmas party.

Hartman Creek State Park, portrayed Mrs. Hellestad and gave a great presentation describing what the immigrants had to endure during their voyage to the United States and settling into the new land.

The second half of the program saw the unveiling of a portrait of Chet Krause created by Gordon Olson of Milwaukee, and donated to the Iola Historical Society. The portrait is a composite of three images: Chet sitting

(Continued on page 4)

## SKI HILLS ABOUND

*Continued from page 3*

Following is a list of some of the other ski hills that were located in the area, about which little or no information is known by the Iola Historical Society.

### Aasen Hill (No known photograph)

Located northeast of Iola on the Norman Aasen farm.

### Bestul Hill - SPR000133

Bestul Hill was on the Casper Bestul farm located just west of Scandinavia on County Highway B on the north side of the highway.

### Hassler Hill

(No known photographs)

February 1, 1925, Charlie Hassler built a scaffold on the Elef Hassler farm just west of Scandinavia on County Highway B on the south side of the highway.

### Kettle Hole Hill

(No known photographs)

Kettle Hole Ski Hill was located at the west edge of Scandinavia.

According to information the Iola Historical Society has received this was a double hill that created a natural ski jump. No scaffold was built.

### Knutson Hill

(No known photographs)

According to one source, the Knutson Hill was built on the Clarence Knutson farm in 1912, and was located on a hill near Black Lake, southeast of Iola. This ski hill was also referred to as St Lawrence Hill, and also Black Lake Hill. However in the January 5, 1911, edition of the *Iola Herald* the following was found;

**"Ogdensburg Ski Tournament,"**  
*"All lovers of the popular Norwegian sport, skiing, will have a chance to see the First Annual Tournament" at Ogdensburg Sunday afternoon, January 29, at 1:30 p. m. Look for Large bills.' In 1920 the Iola Herald reported "Ski scaffold sold to H. C. Cleaves;" "The scaffold was located on the farm of Albert Knutson, east of Iola. It was erected at the cost of more than \$300.00 previous to the 1915 tournament." It states that it was sold; "Owing to a lack of interest in the ski sport. The club held its eighth annual tournament in 1916."*

Published reports on the Ogdensburg tournaments and the closing of the hill means the ski hill was possibly built as early as 1908.

### ODD Ski Club, Nelsonville - SPR000057

The first known ski meet in the area was held by the ODD Ski Club of Nelsonville in 1909 at Amherst.

### Peru Hill - SPR000136

On February 22, 1922, a ski tournament was held at Severson Hill in Peru. This is the first mention of Peru having a ski hill. The ski club was named Central Wisconsin Ski Club. Ski tournaments were held at Severson Hill at Peru until 1932, when a second hill was built on the Strand farm and was referred to as New Hope Ski Hill. In the November 28, 1940, *Iola Herald* the following headline appears *"Gale Wrecks New Hope Ski Slide"* at which time the hill was dismantled.

### Peterson Mill Hill

(No known photographs)

Peterson Mill Hill was built by the Peterson Mill Ski Club on the Jenson property southwest of Scandinavia by Sand Lake and was also referred to as Jenson Hill. Tournaments were held here during the 1930's.

### Rosholt Ski Hill (No photograph)

Rosholt Club had their hill located in Rosholt at the fair grounds.

### Scandinavia, Fleckkesbakken (Fleck's Hill) - SPR000041

The Scandinavia Ski Club build their ski hill on land just south of Scandinavia located on the southeast corner of Highway 49 and Shady Drive which was owned by Edward Fleck. The first ski tournament at Fleckkesbakken was held on January 22, 1911, which suggests the hill was probably built in 1910. During the winter months you can still see where the ski scaffold was located just south of Scandinavia on the left of Highway 49 since trees have not grown back on the landing hill and out run.

### Scandinavia Hill

(No known photographs)

There was also a ski hill located in the Village of Scandinavia, probably in the 1940's or 1950's east of Pleasant Street, and in the area between Norse and Depot Streets.

## Events Schedule

### Monday, January 26

Board Meeting, Office, 210 Depot Street.

### Saturday, February 7

Display Booth, Lutefisk Supper I-S High School.

### Monday, February 23

General Meeting, Office, 210 Depot Street

### Monday, March 30

Board Meeting, Office, 210 Depot St.

### Wipf Grove Ski Hill

(No known photographs)

Iola also had a ski tournament on January 22, 1911, for youngsters ranging in ages from nine to 11 with a ski slide about twelve feet high at Wipf Grove Ski Hill. This is where Hogsback Hill would eventually be built in 1938.

For more information about the ski hills visit our display table at the Lutefisk Supper during the Iola Winter Carnival.

### CHRISTMAS PARTY

*Continued from page 3*

at a library table which he had in his bedroom on which he worked to layout the first issues of *Numismatic News*. Framed by the drapes in the background is Firman Cooper, publisher of the *Iola Herald*, and printer of the first issues of *Numismatic News*. The title "The Collector" is a tribute to Chet's lifelong coin collecting interest and his career as a publisher of hobby publications. The portrait is currently on display at the First National Bank in Iola.

*Editor's note: Gordon was born and raised in Iola. He is the son of Evelyn Olson-Danielson and the late Milo Olson, who for many years operated Olson Hardware in Iola.*

## Donors & Loaners

### October, November, December

**DONATIONS:** David Anderson, Richard Anderson, Kim Bartel, Joel Edler, Corrine Flaata (1890 McCormick Reaper on permanent loan), Trey and Mary Foerster and Journal Community Publishing Group, Chet Krause, Lyle Mork, Nellie Mork, Gordon Olson, Roger Peterson, Sharon Peterson, Diane Swenson, Charlie Thompson. **CASH DONATIONS: 210 Dr. Project Fund** - Bryan and Darlene Budsberg, Class of 1958, DeRonda and Patricia Engebretson, First National Bank of Iola, Virginia Fogelberg, Don and Carolyn Halverson, Norman and Doris Larson, Ruth Lien, Cecelia Mattson, Our Savior's ELCA Women, Zona Pease. **Memorial Fund** - Bob and Stella Strand. **General Fund** - Krause Auto Collection, Chris Ross, Kay Holz. **Professional Services, Materials, and Non-Profit Discounts** - Scott Bestul, Brian's Custom Masonry, Iola Lions Club, John Lashua, Earl Lukaszewski, Mechanical Connections, Charlie Wasrud, River Road Community Garden, Roger Voie.

*Please let us know if we missed anyone. We apologize for any oversights.*

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