

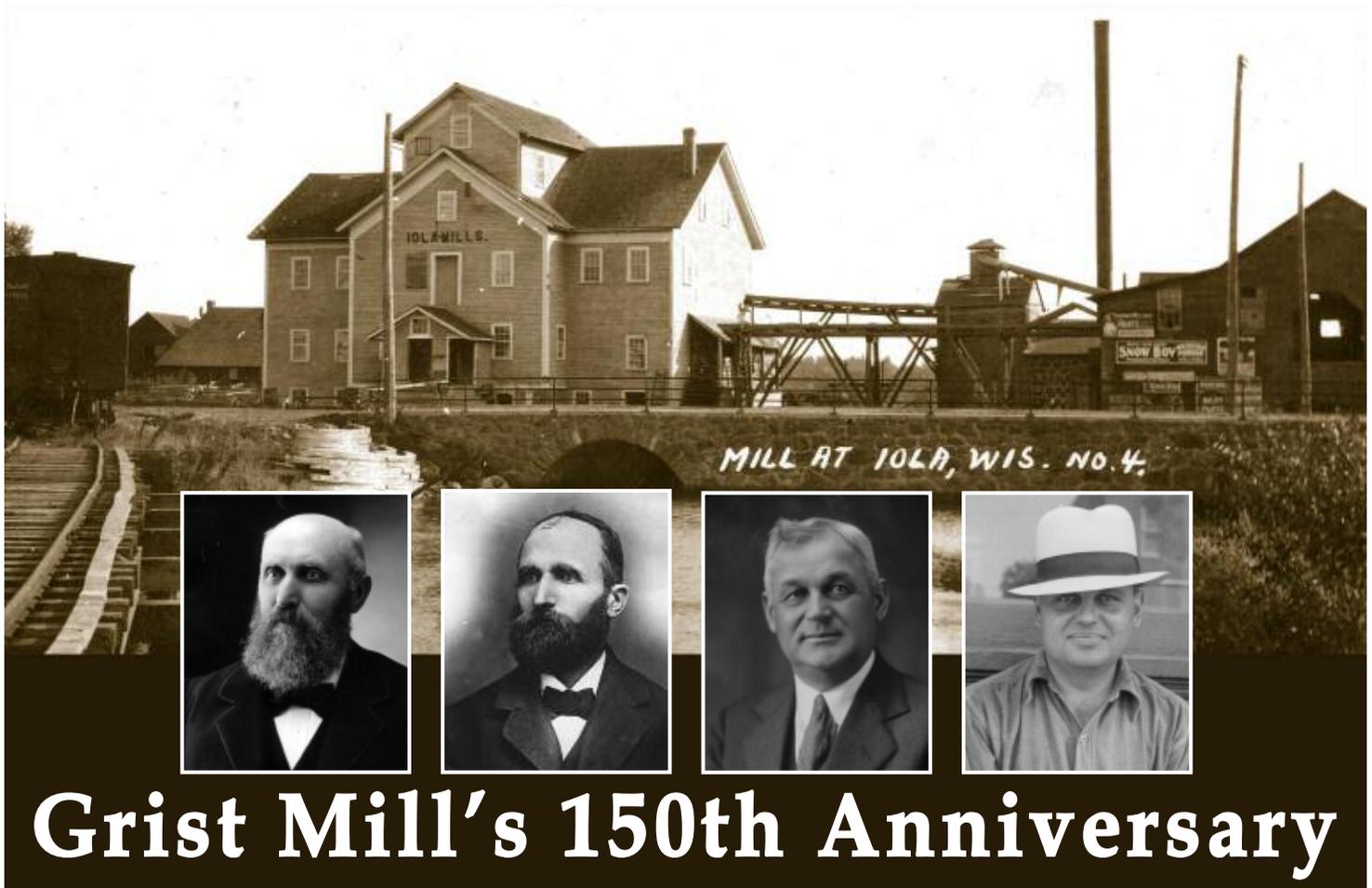
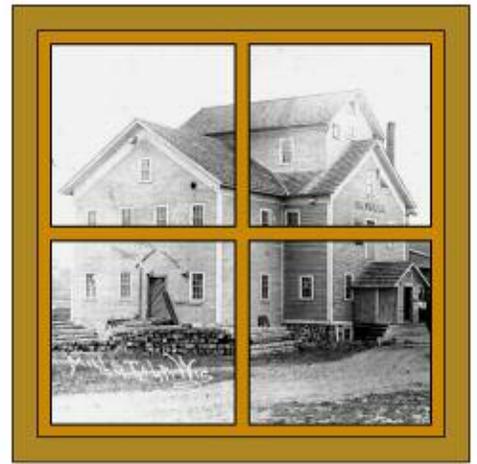
# The Iola Historical Society's Window

Quarterly Member and Activities Newsletter

Volume Three

Number Two

Spring 2010



## Grist Mill's 150th Anniversary

*This image of the mill appeared on a realphoto postcard postmarked, Nov. 18, 1907. Note the train on the left is crossing the river and Main Street and going to the north side of the mill. The rail spur was constructed in 1893, so the photograph was taken sometime during the 1893-1907 period. The four Wipfs who owned the mill shown are, from left to right, Jacob (1834-1910); Conrad (1839-1891); Frederick C. (1873-1947); and Frederick J. (1905-1986).*

The damming of the South Branch of the Little Wolf River began around 1853. The owners involved in the early development of the Iola Mills property included Silas Miller, Samuel Stoner and Milton Baldwin.

Soon after, Samuel S. Chandler along with his brother Colonel J. W.

Chandler and Milton Baldwin gained ownership and built a saw mill on the property.

On February 7, 1857, Samuel Chandler and company leased two-thirds interest in the mill known as "Chandler's & Baldwin's Mill" to Henry Wipf and his two sons, Jacob and Conrad. The rental was

\$200.00 a year, with the agreement dated January 10, with \$50 deductible for maintenance and repairs.

In 1860 a grist mill was completed on the site and on December 26, 1860, Henry Wipf and sons pur-

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## President's Corner

# Our Society Over The Years

by Robert Strand

Summer is drawing near so it's time to start planning for our first big fund raiser of 2010. The 26th Annual Strawberry Fest and Whatzit Appraisal Day will be held on Sunday, June 27 (always the fourth Sunday of June). The committees need to start planning on the different aspects of the fest. We need volunteers for the following committees: Food Tent, Appraisal Area, Lost Arts Areas, Kids Games, Public Relations, and Raffle Tickets and Prizes.

Caroline Adams is making a quilt and donating it to the Iola Historical Society to be used as one of the raffle prizes for the Strawberry Fest. The quilt will show reproductions of six historical images in the center of the design, each being approximately 8" x 10". There will be several old postcard images displayed around the perimeter of the quilt as well.

With the weather warming up and just a little over four weeks before we open for the 2010 season, we will need to implement our "Wednesday Morning Workdays" once again. April work days will on the 7th, 14th, 21st and the 28th. Work days will begin at 9:00 am and continue until to noon, or later if required.

We will also need volunteers to help as docents when we are open to the public on Saturdays. This year we will have additional displays for the public to view; 100 years of Boy

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The most recent surge of development in the growth of the society dazzled most of us old timers. I guess this all started when we learned through Jim Aanstad that the Pierce Manufacturing Company of Appleton, one of the country's leading builders of fire and rescue equipment, had a piece of firefighting equipment on display that they wished to get rid of. This Waterous Pumper, originally acquired by the Iola Fire Department in 1913, fully restored by Pierce in 1988, which they were willing to donate back to the community with the understanding that it would be placed on permanent display. With this piece of equipment coming into our possession in 2005, this inspired Cliff Mishler to come up with a plan for the construction of a firehouse modeled after the original 1901 Iola firehouse, but with three bays, to accommodate three firefighting units instead of two.

Chet Krause had once owned the Waterous Pumper, but had sold it to Doug Ogilvie, president of Pierce Manufacturing, in the mid-1980s, with the understanding that it would be restored and made available to the Iola community on special occasions. Meanwhile, Chet had retired and sold the bulk of his antique auto collection, with the exception of his military jeep collection, and a few other vehicles of local interest. Among these other vehicles were two other Iola firefighting trucks, a 1924 Model "T"

Ford hose truck, and a 1938 Reo combination pumper and hose truck, which he donated to the society with the completion of the 1901 firehouse replication.

Chet had also swapped buildings with John Lashua, who had operated Lashua excavating out of a building directly across Depot Street from the old depot, with intentions of storing his jeep collection there, but as his jeep collection grew the entire collection could not be housed in the Lashua building, so he donated it to the society. Subsequently, during January of 2008, he made a monetary donation to the society for the purchase of a building from Tony Hawke, occupied by Hawke excavation, situated adjacent to the Lashua building. This larger building was sufficient to house the jeep collection, with it being initially traded to Chet in exchange for the Lashua building. Ultimately, however, this property was donated to the society as well, with Chet being accorded a lifetime lease for the housing of his collection.

Lyle Mork had become the elected president of the Iola Historical Society in 2006. Having been born and raised in Iola, Mork had returned to the community to retire a couple years earlier, and had immediately become a member of the society, becoming very active in it during his first months of membership. Lyle has turned out to be a special leader of the society because he has been relentless in getting things done, including the sorting and storage for retrieval of photos and the gathering of the history on many of the items we have on display.

More recently Tom and Melody Fucik, current owners of the Iola Mills property, have also become involved members of the society. As Tom's background includes that of having been the financial officer of a golf course in the Appleton area, he

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

#### Officers:

Lyle Mork, President  
Stella Strand, Vice-President  
Kathleen Lehman, Secretary  
Tom Fucik, Treasurer

#### Board of Directors

Cliff Mishler, Robert Stamsted, Doug Watson  
e-mail address: iolahistoricalociety@tds.net  
Phone: (715) 445-IOLA (4652)



*This is the oldest known photograph of the Iola Mills Grist Mill that was built in 1860 and this photograph was taken in 1861. The saw mill shown to the right of the mill was built in 1854. Notice how low the land was in comparison to the mill today.*

### **Grist Mill's 150th Anniversary Continued from page 1**

chased the two-thirds interest for \$2,600.00, leaving Baldwin still holding the remaining one-third interest. In 1862 a flour mill was added to the operation. In 1866, Milton Baldwin sold out his third of the mill to the Wipf's.

Circa 1873-1874 Jacob Wipf purchased a team of horses from Peter Gurholt of Scandinavia. The horses were named 'Fannie' and 'Nellie', one a sorrel and the other a grey. The Wipf's used these horses for logging nearby wooded areas through sixteen winters.

By 1875 ownership of the operation passed to Henry's sons, Jacob and Conrad, and it became known as J & C Wipf Mills. In 1893 the Wipf brothers built a rail spur to the Iola Mills property. The existing sawmill was rebuilt in 1898 along with a new mill office and a stone building containing the power plant.

As lumbering diminished, in 1933 the saw mill was torn down, with the lumber planing operation moved to the grist mill. The combined lumber planing mill and feed mill continued operating until 1963; when the mill was closed.

The Wipf brothers were leaders in the building the Iola community as it developed through its first century of existence. No family was more highly regarded in its generation. The Wipf family operated the mill for four generations, with Frederick J. Wipf being the last

Wipf operating owner of the mill.

In 1961 Frederick 'Fred' Wipf, the last member of the Wipf family, sold the property to Lake Iola Estates Inc., but the feed mill continued operating until 1963. In 1963 Bob and Stella Strand purchased the site and converted the mill into a museum, preserving all of the original machinery and collecting artifacts and collections important to Iola's rich history.

Al and Judy Morey purchased the mill in 1986. Al and Judy had the grist mill, the engine house, and the sawmill office listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

In 1996 the current owners Tom and Melody Fucik, purchased the property, closing the museum in order to begin a concerted effort to restore and preserve the building itself. The mill now has a restored foundation, a new roof, and about 60% of the siding and windows have been restored or replaced. The original water turbine has been rebuilt and is again being used to produce electrical power, having been brought back on line in 1999.

In what was built as a gift shop for the museum, the Millstone restaurant opened in 2007. The shop features Italian Gelato and other frozen treats, sandwiches, salads, locally brewed beer and an espresso bar.

Future plans include reopening the mill and creating a living museum with additional seating for the Millstone, live music and other functions.



*Greg Loescher (left), chairperson for the Historic Iola marker program, and Lyle Mork (right), president of the Iola Historical Society, stand in front of the first in a series of markers citing historic moments and buildings in and around Iola. The first marker commemorates 100 years of the Iola Winter Sports Club ski jumping in Iola, which began in 1910, and is affixed to the front of the chalet at the Iola Winter Sports Club complex north of Iola.*



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

*Continued from page 2*

Scouting courtesy of George Cuhaj, 100 Years of the Iola Winter Sports Club and ski jumping in Iola and a display recognizing the 150 years of the Iola Mills grist mill.

We will also need several docents for Sunday, May 30, when we will host a special tour by the Wisconsin Chapter of the Model 'A' Club of America. They will arrive in 40 antique cars with participation by perhaps 75-80 members and guests.

This should be a great year! Last year we had over 500 visitors and hope to pass that number this year. It's important we have enough docents each Saturday to properly share our heritage and holdings with our guests. Your help is needed. *Lyle*

*Tracy Ambacher, president of the Iola Norseman Snowmobile Club presents a \$500.00 donation to Lyle Mork, president of the Iola Historical Society.*

## Events Schedule

All meetings are held at 210 Depot St.

### Monday, April 26

6:00 pm - IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm - Program: 100 Years of Boy Scouting, George Cuhaj  
IHS General Meeting to follow

### Saturday, May 1, 8, 15, 22, 29

10:00 am to 4:00 pm - Open House at IHS, 210 Depot Street

### Sunday, May 30

10:30 to 12:00 - **Special Tour Wisconsin Chapter of the Model A Club of America**

### Monday, May 31

**Memorial Day**

### Tuesday, June 1

6:00 pm - IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm - IHS General Meeting

### Saturday, June 5, 12, 19, 26

10:00 am to 4:00 pm - Open House at IHS, 210 Depot Street

### Monday, June 27

11:00 am to 4:00 pm - **Strawberry Fest and Whatzit Appraisal Day.** Historical Village Complex, 210 Depot Street

### Monday, June 28

6:00 pm - IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting.

## In The Window

View of the north side of the Iola Mill. Photo was taken sometime after the railroad siding was removed.

## SOCIETY'S HISTORY

*Continued from page 2*

expressed an interest in taking over the treasurer responsibility when it became available. He assumed that duty as of the beginning of 2009. Doug Watson, one of the founders and president of our sister organization in Scandinavia, "Friends of Scandinavia History" (FOSH), also became an involved member at about the same time, assuming responsibilities in the area of our publications and public relations activities.

To many members, myself included, it seemed as if miracles were unfolding right before our eyes. Suddenly, the buildings we had

looked at with longing--the Hawke and Lashua properties--but with no thoughts of ever possibly owning them, became ours. The size of our complex has exploded with the addition of those two properties and the firehouse over the past two years. These developments have added a bold sparkle to the eyes of not only the members, but to the eyes of the citizens of Iola and the adjacent area. I have the feeling that we are still not at the end of our growth, even though there is presently little land left for expanding in the proximity of the society grounds.

With the historic Iola Mills property in the hands of the Fuciks, the huge task of restoring the property lies ahead for them.

## Donors & Loaners

January • February • March

**ARCHIVAL DONATIONS:** Don & Chris Aasen, Central Wisconsin Electrical Cooperative. Leonel Bestul, Leroy Borth, Colin Bruce II, Harold Buchholz, James Cady, Jim Cady, Evelyn Danielson, Deronda and Patricia Engebretson, Dorothy Erickson, First National Bank, David Groenier, Milo Halstad, Don Halverson, Don "Smokey" Helgerson, Iola Millstone, Iola Winter Sports Club, Gary Jacobson, Leland and Ruth Johnson, Shelly Kunzman, Krystal Krause, Chet Krause, Martin Langdok Estate, Greg Loescher, Julian and Pat Leer, Bob Lemke, Jean Loken, Clifford Mishler, Lyle Mork, Patty Mork, Roger Nassen, Joyce Miller-Nygaard Family, DeLyle Omholt Family, Lowell Peterson, Roger Peterson, Bill Smith, Bob Strand, Wanda Taylor, Dean 'Duke' Tuomi, Steve Voie, Robert Wasrud. **MONETARY and IN-KIND:** Kathy Borgmann, Colin Bruce II, Bob and Bev Ellingson, Helen Furst, John and Yvonne Gurholt, Iola Norseman Snowmobile Club, Iola Winter Sports Club, Richard Jenson, Chet Krause, Clifford Mishler, Phyllis Morris, Scandi Auto Repair, Bob Stamstad, Doug Watson.

*Please let us know if we missed anyone.*