

The Iola Historical Society's Window

Quarterly Member and Activities Newsletter

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It's Not Just a Picture - It's History

There is an old saying, “a picture is worth a thousand words,” but sometimes you need to know more about the story behind the photograph to really understand and enjoy the full scope of the history with which it is associated. When you first look at the picture that accompanies this article you might just see a street and some old buildings, but if you look closer and understand the associated history it tells you so much more. The photograph looks south at the 100 block of South Main Street, which at this time in history was Iola’s main business area. This photograph (STR000004) was taken between 1886 and 1898 and is verified by when the Anson Hotel was built (1886) and the sign of Dr. Alfred G. Dale as a practicing physician, who retired in 1898.

Looking at the photograph closely

from left to right, the building at the extreme left (145 S. Main) was the Anson House, which also operated as the Anson

Iola Herald: August 13, 1903 --
Patrons of the Anson Hotel will be pleased to find a bus waiting for them at the depot hereafter.

Hotel. When this photograph was taken it was owned and operated by Harry Anson who built the hotel in 1886. Mr. & Mrs. Frederick Rhode, who purchased the hotel from Anson in 1908, ran the hotel for about a year and a half, selling it to George Gregerson in January of 1910. Joseph B. Bennett, Nels Ogren and Christian “Chris” Strand all ran the hotel over subsequent years.

Some subsequent businesses housed in the building included those conducted

by Mr. & Mrs. H. W. Ihlenfeldt, who had a jewelry store; Olive Peterson who had her chiropractic office in the building; Mr. & Mrs. Herman Nowak who operated a meat market and grocery store in the building. On May 1, 1966, Robert and Pat Grosbier purchased the business and changed the name to “Bob’s Market.” Pat Grosbier currently operates Pat’s

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In The Window

Vera Duesterbeck of New London demonstrates two methods of candle making--dipping the wicks in molten wax, and pouring molten wax into a six-candle mold-- at the October 2nd Lost Arts Fair.

President's Corner

Another year is coming to an end. We have only one more meeting left, which will be held on October 25 at 6:30 pm at 210 Depot Street office/museum building.

This has been a very active summer including the traditional Strawberry Fest and Whatzit Appraisal Fair, our 26th annual, and our new undertaking, the Lost Arts Fair and Taste of Norway event. Both were very successful and they will be our two major fund raisers next year.

A new Business Partner Membership was created with annual dues of \$100.00. Many local businesses have already signed up.

We have had an increase in visitors each year since we started having open house on Saturdays during the summer. Approximately 1,000 people visited the Iola Historical Society on Saturdays, during the Strawberry Fest and Whatzit Appraisal Fair, the Lost Arts Fair and Taste of Norway event and while hosting other special tourgroups during the year.

I want to thank all members for their membership dues and donations that help pay the bills. Without your support we would not be where we are today.

Lyle

NOT JUST A PICTURE *Continued from page 1*

Floral & Gifts in the buildings.

The second building was the "Blue Front Saloon" (175 S. Main) and was operated over the years by Martin Benson, Les Boldig and Charles Wallace. Others who conducted businesses in this building over the years were Julius Grove, Christian Thompson and Ole Halverson, who ran general stores. W. E. Ayers ran a Sherwin-Williams paint store. Melford Forseth and Linus Ball ran their shoe stores in this building. Today it is used as an apartment.

In the background you can see a home that still stands today at 395 South Main Street currently occupied by Elroy and Kimberly Thoma.

Moving to the right side of the street you see the Lutheran Synod Church which was organized in 1888 as a result of the split of the Old Scandinavia Church. The building was erected in 1890 and in 1919 the Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Synod Congregation formed a joint pastorate, the church thereafter being referred to as the Zion Lutheran Church. In 1937 the two congregations merged into one, becoming Our Savior's Lutheran Church. The church building was dismantled in 1949.

The next structure is the old band stand that had the band sitting high on the second floor, with the first floor probably being used for storage. Two large wheels were affixed to it so it could be pulled around town by horses and set up for the music concerts. In 1940 the community band gave the bandstand to the Iola Ski Club (Iola Winter Sports Club); it was pulled up the pond on the ice to the Hogsback Ski Hill, where it was used as a warming house and viewing stand into the 1950s.

The Anderson Brothers Restaurant is

the next building. It later housed a bowling alley according to a story in the December 29, 1910, Iola Herald about a fire that destroyed the building just to the north. After further investigation the first mention of a bowling alley appeared in the September 3, 1903, issue of the *Iola Herald*. Currently no other information is known about this building.

The next building housed the Swenson Brothers Meat Market which was owned by John and Halbert Swenson. Their Meat Market was moved to the 100 block of North Main Street at a later date. E. M. Taylor had a paint shop in the building and on Thursday, December 22, 1910, the building was destroyed by a fire, with the ruins being torn down a short time after the fire.

Later a block building was erected housing Swenson Bros. & Austin – Overland and a Ford automobile dealership. Other businesses that operated out of the later building were the Alfred Olson Garage and the Jake Rosholt Garage. This building was also subsequently occupied by the REA (Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative) and Waupaca County Highway Department. The Iola Herald Publishing & Job Printing shop also occupied this building at one time according to the book "A History of Iola." The block building was torn down by the Village of Iola in April of 1999, nine years after the new community building was constructed in 1990.

The next building was the home and office of Dr. Alfred C. Dale, MD, with the sign proclaiming he was a physician and



surgeon. He practiced medicine in Iola and in this building until 1898 when Dr. T. E. Loope, MD took over his practice. The building was erected by C. K. Blandin in 1855 when he opened the first store in Iola. In 1856 a Post Office was established by the government, Mr. Blandin being appointed postmaster, with his store serving as the first Post Office. Others that occupied the building over the years were photographer William Parks and dentist Dr. T. M. Fairchild. Abe and Clara Katz and later Mr. & Mrs. Lloyd

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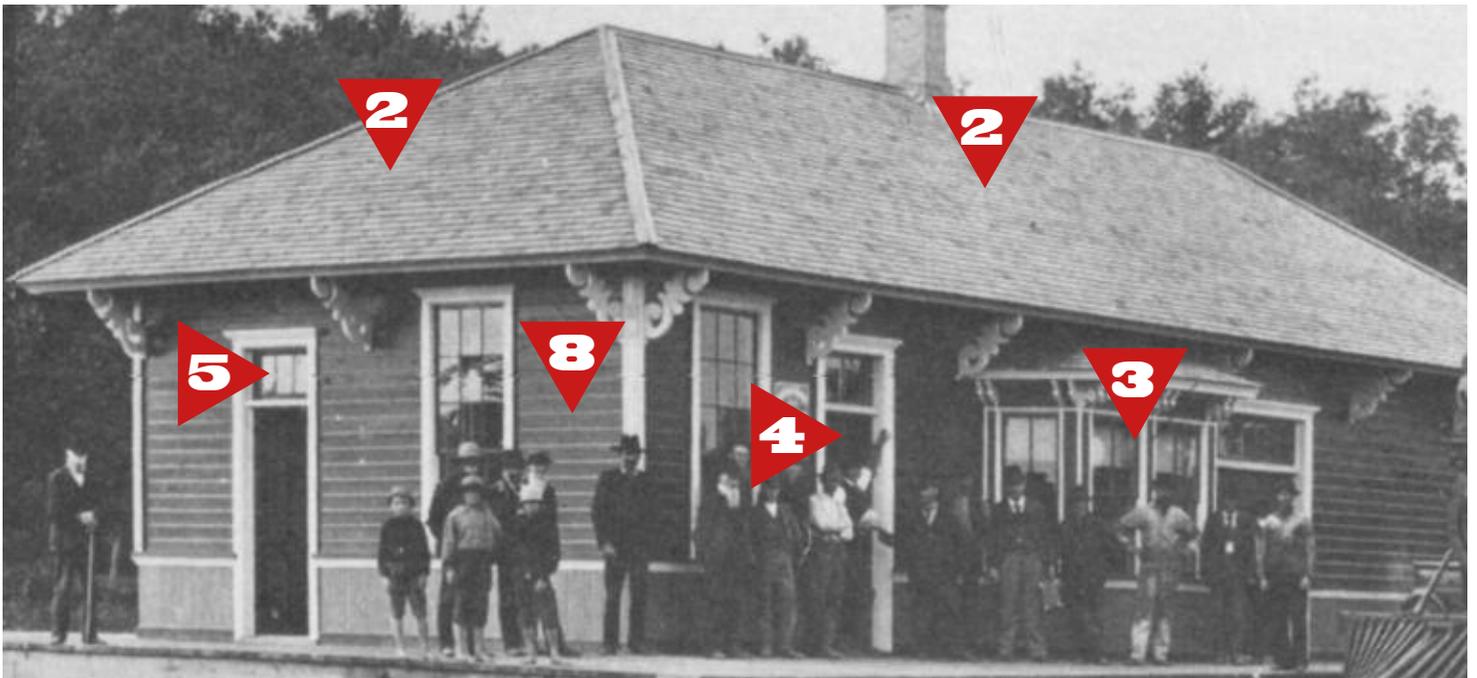
The Iola Historical Society
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Officers:

Lyle Mork, President
Stella Strand, Vice-President
Tom Fucik, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Cliff Mishler, Robert Stamsted, Doug Watson
e-mail address: iolahistoricalociety@tds.net
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Iola & Northern Railroad Depot Restoration in Progress

The Iola Historical Society has started on a full restoration of the old depot. To date we have removed the inside restroom and suspended ceiling in the freight room area which were not original.

Here are some of the other projects which will be taking place:

- 1** Repair the foundation.
- 2** Re-roof with cedar shake shingles.
- 3** Reconstruct large bay window in the depot agents office area.
- 4** Add exterior door with transom leading from the passenger waiting room to the train.
- 5** Add the missing transom over the existing door in waiting room.
- 6** Reinstall wall between depot agents
- 7** Restore ticket window where passengers purchased tickets.
- 8** Paint to original color scheme.
- 9** Remove interior board walls and ceiling insulation in freight room.

This project, which is being spearheaded by board members Doug Watson and Bob Stamsted, will be a major expense so we are looking for funds to complete this restoration project. Your monetary support will be appreciated.

Business Partners

Bruce Meagher LLC, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative, Community Insurance & Associates, Crystal Café, Depot Street Station, Eclectic Pursuits, Bob & Bev Ellingson, First National Bank, Iola IGA, Iola Old Car Show, Iola-Scandinavia Chamber of Commerce, Iola Vision Center, JD's Corner Bar, Living Oaks & Iola Living Assistance, Jeffrey Louison, CPA, Mechanical Connections, Millstone of Iola Mills, Premier Community Bank, Shoemaker Construction, and Sweet Medicine Prescriptions Plus, Inc.

Supporting Members

Scott & Karri Bestul, DeRonda & Patricia Engebretson, Don & Carolyn Halverson, Don Helgerson, Iola Fire & Ambulance Service, Richard Jensen, Lee & Ruth Johnson, Sherry Kielblock, Sue Loken, Duanne & Darlene Louison, Thomas & Linda Martin, Phyllis Morris, Joan Niemiec, State Farm Insurance-Dan Tap Agent, David & Ruth Strand, Roger Voie, Bill Wilker, and Craig Wright

Iola Historical Society Receives Two Grants

The Iola Historical Society recently received two grants which provide partial funding for advancing a major project that we were seeking to implement.

The first grant was a \$700.00 matching funds mini-grant from the Wisconsin Historical Society to purchase 72 acid free archival boxes and acid free tissue paper for proper storage of our textile collection. The collection includes military uniforms from WWI, WWII, Korean War and the Vietnam War along with vintage clothing including wedding dresses and many other pieces of clothing with Iola history.

The second grant was for \$2,000.00 from the Waupaca Area Community Foundation, an affiliate of the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region. This grant will be used, along with a \$3,600.00 donation from Maynard Stromberg of Milwaukee, to build a display case seventeen feet long and over six feet tall. The case will house a display showing the sequence of making a violin, and will include templates, tools and other materials used. Maynard is the son of Bert Stromberg of Iola, who made violins back in the 1930s, & 1940s.

NOT JUST A PICTURE

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Cooper also occupied it for their home. This building was purchased in 1996 by Voie Funeral Home Inc. and torn down that same year.

The last building in the photograph was the P. C. Gunderson Boot & Shoe Maker shop. Pete Gunderson ran the shop for several years. Oscar N. Nelson ran his shoe repair shop here later. Another occupant of the building was Roy Schartle, who ran a dry cleaning business and later Faultless Cleaners as a dry cleaning pickup station. The building was purchased by Voie Funeral Home in 1969 and torn down that same year, expanding the funeral home to the south of the original building, the space today serving as the family lounge, casket display room and embalming room..



As you extract details from the photograph, you detect much more, such as gas street lights, a gentleman on a bicycle, several hitching posts and a tall pole. Investigation has revealed that this pole is documented in the Iola Herald as being a large flag pole that the local men erected sometime after the Civil War for unfurling a large flag made by local women. There are boardwalks instead of concrete sidewalks and the home and office of Dr. Dale had a tall stone wall along the boardwalk. The "Howe" sign situated near the bandstand is where the hay scales were for farmers.



Matt Honken provided horse drawn wagon rides during the Iola Historical Society's Lost Arts Fair and Taste of Norway event on Saturday, October 2. The wagon was pulled by a team of Percheron horses owned by Matt. One of the horses is looking down at Hammer, a full grown mini-horse as if to say, "What the heck is this?" The mini is being held by Caleb Loken, grandson of the mini's owner Leroy Borth. Standing to the left talking with Matt is Norman Johnson of Scandinavia.

If you have any photographs or information regarding any of the buildings or businesses located in the buildings described in this article, or any other businesses, please contact the Iola Historical Society. The Iola Historical Society is always looking for photographs that captured the history of Iola. You may donate the photographs to the Iola Historical Society or loan them to us for scanning into our historical archive and return to you unharmed.



First Lost Arts Fair and Taste of Norway Event Draws Large Crowd.

The Iola Historical Society kicked off its newest event, Lost Arts Fair and Taste of Norway, on Saturday, October 2nd. Although the weather was somewhat cool and a little breezy at times, the event was very successful.

The Society would like to thank all the artisans and demonstrators who participated, and of course to everyone who attended. A special thank you to all the volunteers who made everything run so smoothly.

Donors & Loaners

July • August • September

ARCHIVAL DONATIONS: Helmer 'Andy' Anderson Jr., Ray Arndt, Richard Bahr, Harold Buchholz, Colin Bruce II, Elaine Crase, Howard & Charlotte Dunn, Joel Edler, F & W Publications Inc., Leroy Hutkowski, Howard Inderdahl, Norman Johnson, Iola Lions Club, Sherry Kielblock, Ken Koch, Chet Krause, Lee Nelson, Ida Olson, Robert Lashua, Julian & Pat Leer, Mati Palm Leis Jr., Mary Mork, Barbara Egner-Pelmar, Bill Smith, Bob Stamstad, Bob Strand, David Strand, Philip Strand, Maynard Stromberg, Eugene Voie, Harold Zawacki, Brendan Zoglman,

MONETARY AND IN-KIND: Hilltopper Alumni Association, Iola Old Car Show, Inc., Leland & Ruth Johnson, Kafe Beans, Chet Krause, Barbara Egner-Pelmar, Maynard Stromberg, Tre Lag Stevne, Northland Church, Eugene Voie, Homestead Realty Inc., Jim Jenson, Greg Loescher.

GRANTS: Wisconsin Historical Society and Waupaca Area Community Foundation.

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

Events Schedule

(All meetings are held at 210 Depot St.)

Wednesday, October 6, 13, 20, 27

8:30 am Work Day

Working on depot restoration

Closing up the buildings for winter

Monday, October 25

6:00 pm IHS Board Meeting

6:30 pm IHS General Meeting

Voting on new President and Secretary

Monday, December 20

Iola Historical Society Christmas Party