

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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On Monday morning, Sept. 29, about 40 students and chaperones of the Wolf River Homeschool group out of Amherst toured the Iola Historic Village and museum complex as an educational outing that included a picnic lunch hosted in the Machine Shed.

A couple additional group events are upcoming. On Saturday, Oct. 4, the IHS will be hosting the 5th annual Taste of Norway & Lost Arts Fair, incorporating the I-S Chamber of Commerce's annual Fall Craft & Gift Show. Then, on the evening of Friday, Oct. 31 -- Halloween -- in conjunction with a Haunted Mill kids event hosted at the Iola Mills, a pair of age appropriate movies will be shown at the Machine Shed.

Now, as we head into the generally quiet winter season, there is lots to do internally, as we continue to upgrade our properties for visitation in 2015. Lyle Mork and Doug Watson will be busying themselves with final development and installation of the Ray Elmer Towne Native American artifacts collection. Charles Thompson will be engaged in refining the R. I. Anderson machine tools exhibit area, setting the tools up operationally and installing accent lighting.

Another major undertaking involving a team of volunteers will be the sorting and resettlement of our archival property holdings on storage shelving installed in the new Strand Resource Center, providing greatly improved preservation and access.

## 2014 Events Schedule

### Monday, September 29

5:45 pm IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting

### Saturday, October 4

10:00 a.m - 3:00 pm 5th Annual Taste of Norway & Lost Arts Fair & Fall Craft & Gift Show

### Monday, October 27

5:45 pm IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting.  
Annual Board & Officers Election,  
Last Business Meetings for 2014.

### Saturday, December 15

5:30 p.m. IHS Annual Christmas Potluck Banquet at The Millstone.

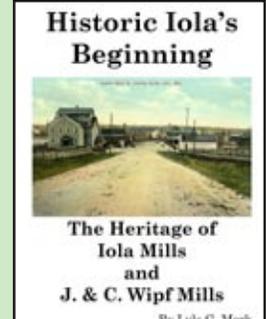
### Monday, January 26, 2015

First Business Meetings for 2015  
5:45 pm IHS Board Meeting  
6:30 pm IHS General Meeting

## New Mork Book Chronicles Iola Mills Heritage

On August 9, 2014, a new book authored by Lyle G. Mork capturing the shared heritage of the Iola Mills and the Iola community was released during a special book signing event hosted at the historic site. Priced at \$20, the 134 page book is liberally illustrated with historic photos related to the mill properties with signed copies available for purchase. All proceeds from sales of the book are earmarked to benefit Iola Historical Society projects.

The book is available for sale at The Millstone restaurant at 300 North State Street, adjacent to the mill, or direct from the Iola Historical Society at 210 Depot Street. The book may be ordered for mail delivery, at an additional cost of \$5 (total \$25), from the Iola Historical Society, P. O. Box 412, Iola, WI 54945. Phone requests should be directed to: 715-445-IOLA(4652); e-mail requests should be directed to: [IolaHistoricalSociety@tds.net](mailto:IolaHistoricalSociety@tds.net).



## HERITAGE OF THE MILLS

*Continued from page 1*

**1986** -- The J. & C. Wipf mill property, including an 1860s era log cabin from Peru moved to the site in 1978, were sold to Allen and Judy Morey on December 30, who planned to continue it as a museum.

**1987** -- The Moreys pursued and obtained National Registry recognition for the Iola Mills from the Wisconsin Historical Preservation Review Board according to a report carried in

the August 13 edition of the *Iola Herald*. On December 8 it was formally enrolled on the National Register of Historic Places.

**1996** -- The Iola Mills property was sold to Tom and Melody Fucik on July 15, who subsequently undertook a comprehensive ground to roof historic renovation of the mill. During this process the 19th century water turbine dynamo was removed, rebuilt and returned to working order in 1999, providing electricity to serve the property and contributing excess capacity to the electrical grid.

## Donors & Loaners

July • August • September

**ARCHIVAL DONATIONS:** Ann Church (two cook books of Iola and Scandinavia), Eugene Engebretson (Ingram Regulator wall clock, Bert Stromberg violin), Gene & Donna Hooker (West Hill School bell), Gerald Jorgenson (J. & C. Wipf match safe), Gary Larson (historic pictures), Ruth Lien (Hilltopper school newsletters 1938-41), Mrs. Miller (Shady Grove School images), Clifford Mishler (candy tub shipped to T. L. Kjendalen, Iola), Donald Van Deest (Russell Junior road grader), Gerald Voie (two Norwegian language primers).

**DONATIONS FOR CASH AND IN-KIND:** Central Wisconsin Tractor Club [recent name change from Fox Valley Two Cylinder Club] (cash for R.I. Anderson exhibit), Carol A. Hall (cash undesignated), Gregory J. Loescher (cash for painting 210 Depot St. exterior), Joan Paulson (cash undesignated), Sharon Peterson (cash raffle prize, maintenance on Fire House exterior doors).

## 2014 Supporting Members

The Iola Historical Society wishes to extend special recognition and thanks to the following individuals and organizations for the extra financial support their ongoing status as Supporting Members provides to the Society's activities: Rod & Grace Bahr, Doris Beier, Mary Bennett, Bark L. Beske, Scott & Karri Bestul, LeRoy & Carolyn Borth, Robert & Beverly Ellingson, DeRonda & Patricia Engebretson, Helene M. Furst, John & Yvonne Gurholt, Leonard & Irene Haroldson, Iola & Rural Firefighting Service, Lee & Ruth Johnson, Thomas & Linda Martin, Phyllis Morris, Joan & Richard Niemiec, Barbara Egner-Pelmar, David & Ruth Strand, Philip A. Strand, Forrest & Virginia Torgerson, Roger Voie, Dr. Richard F. Wilker, William & Jacqueline Wilker.

# The Iola Historical Society's Window

Quarterly Member and Activities Newsletter

Volume Seven

Number Four

Fall 2014



## The Heritage of Iola Mills and J. & C. Wipf Mills



The history and development of the Iola Mills and early Iola are detailed in a recently published book -- *Historic Iola's Beginning* -- authored by local historian Lyle G. Mork as a project of the Iola Historical Society. The presentation traces the heritage of Iola Mills and the J. & C. Wipf Mills from their early 1850s establishment when the fledgling operation was initially known as "Chandler's & Baldwin's Mill" through 160 years to the present time.

The book was released on August 9, 2014, during a special reception and book signing event hosted by the present owners of the Iola Mills property, Tom and Melody Fucik, at The Millstone of Iola Mills. The event featured historical overviews of the evolution of the enterprise provided by the author and the Fuciks, with about 50 guests and others interested in the historically significant event in attendance.

Attending the event, in addition to recent owners of the property, were Al and Judy Morey, and Stella Strand who with her late husband, Robert, had initiated its development as a historical property. Also in attendance were descendants of the Wipf and Chandler families. The Chandler family ties trace to the earliest days of its establishment, those of the Wipfs to its development and operation from 1857 to 1963.

A selection of timeline facts extracted from the

*What would a party be without a cake? Attendees at the August 9, 2014, special reception and book signing party for the release of the newly published book--Historic Iola's Beginning--providing a historic chronicle of the heritage shared by the Iola Mills and J. & C. Wipf Mills, and the Iola community, were treated to a celebratory cake emblazoned with a vintage historical representation in frosting of the setting of the historic structure*

pages of *Historic Iola's Beginning* follow. The text is crammed full of greater detail on these selections, and many more of the developments that evolved over time, illustrative of the invaluable ties between the milling businesses and the community, ties which ceased with the final sale of Wipf business properties 50 years ago. Since then the Iola Mills have been reincarnated as a functioning historical monument to the community's heritage and development.

**1853** -- Settlement of the Iola area began as part of Centerville township, Waupaca county.

**1854** -- The township of Iola, including what today is the township of Helvetia was constituted. -- Silas Miller became the owner of a plot of land on May 13, establishing what became the settlement

*(Continued on page 4)*

# President's Message

We were busier than usual hosting visitor groups during this year's late summer and early fall season. We are delighted to have been accorded these special opportunities to share our facilities, preserved heritage and story with our friends, neighbors and visitors.

On Thursday evening, July 17, the Central Wisconsin Tractor Club held its monthly meeting in the Machine Shed exhibition building. This gathering was arranged by IHS member Charles Thompson, with more than 30 members and guests in attendance.

On Thursday evening, July 31, the threat of inclement weather caused the Iola-Scandinavia Chamber of Commerce to move that week's Thursday Night on Main event to the Machine Shed. Chamber president and IHS board member Greg Loescher indicated over 200 were in attendance.

On Saturday afternoon, Aug. 23, a special visitor program on the country school of Waupaca county was presented in the one-room school house by former school teachers Joan Paulson and Don Hansen. An attendance of around 30 turned out for this special event.

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## Iola Historical Society

210 Depot Street

P. O. Box 412 . Iola, WI 54945

Officers

Clifford Mishler, President

John Bertelson, Jr., Secretary

Tom Fucik, Treasurer

Board of Directors

Greg Loescher, Doug Watson

Stella Strand, Director Emeritus

### Become A Member

Individual Membership .... \$20 yr

Family Membership..... \$30 yr

Supporting Membership... \$50 yr

Individual Life Membership \$200

*Direct remittance payable to:*

Iola Historical Society

P. O. Box 412, Iola, WI 54945-0412

[iolahistoricalociety@tds.net](mailto:iolahistoricalociety@tds.net)

[www.iolahistoricalociety.org](http://www.iolahistoricalociety.org)

Phone: 715-445-IOLA (4652)

## HERITAGE OF THE MILLS

*Continued from page 1*

of Iola. -- Henry (Heinrich) and Elizabeth Wipf arrived in America from Switzerland, briefly residing in Oshkosh, and later settling on a farm located on the north side of Keatings Lake with their two sons, Jacob and Conrad. -- The Wipf children, ages 20 and 18 when they arrived in Iola, were provided private schooling by Jim Ross, one of Iola's first settlers.

**1855** -- The area that is today known as the township of Harrison was added to the township of Iola. -- On April 21 Silas Miller sold a one-third interest in his property, "a forty of land and all appurtenances, meaning a saw mill," to Samuel Stoner for \$2,200. -- Sometime prior to June 11, Silas Miller died, with his two-thirds interest conveying to his three sons. -- On August 25, Samuel Stoner and his wife sold their one-third interest to Milton R. Baldwin. On the same day the estate of Silas Miller sold the remaining two-thirds of the property to Samuel S. Chandler and Baldwin. -- A store was established by C. K. Baldwin on the west side of what is now the 100 block of South Main Street. With a promising outlook, a post office was established in Baldwin's store with him as postmaster.

**1857** -- On February 7, Samuel Chandler rented two-thirds interest in the mill to Henry Wipf and his sons for \$200 a year.

**1859** -- On March 7, Milton Baldwin and his wife sold their one-third interest in the mill to Samuel Chandler.

**1860** -- The Wipfs built a grist mill just north of the saw mill. -- As of November 10, the township of Helvetia was organized, including what is today the township of Wyoming. -- On December 22, Henry Wipf and his sons traded their farm, valued at \$2,600, for the two thirds interest in the saw mill owned by Chandler.

**1861** -- The earliest known photograph taken in Iola depicts the saw mill.

**1866** -- The Wipfs acquired the remaining one-third interest in the mill property, a transaction involving satisfaction of a mortgage held by Baldwin.

**1873** -- On July 31 brothers Jacob and Conrad Wipf acquired sole ownership of the property from their parents Henry and Elizabeth Wipf. The business had been known as Iola Mills, but probably became J. & C. Wipf Mills at this time.

**1875** -- Henry Wipf passed away on September 20 and was buried at Riverside Cemetery, one of 16 Wipfs buried there.

**1889** -- Conrad Wipf died on October 30, with his half of the business being willed to his eight children. -- Jacob Wipf was elected to serve the first of two terms as a Wisconsin Assemblyman, the first from 1889 to 1890 and the second from 1893 to 1895.

**1890** -- As of November the township of Harrison was had been organized and broken off from the township of Iola.

**1892** -- A June 4 election was conducted on a proposal to incorporate Iola as a village, with 68 votes in favor, three against, and "one thrown out because the voter did not have his naturalization papers."

**1898** -- The whistle on a newly installed 60-horsepower steam engine installed in the stone building that still stands between the grist mill and river was blown for the first time on December 10.

**1899** -- A spur of the Iola & Northern Railroad was extended

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depot to the north side of the grist mill during the September 23. -- The *Iola Herald* reported in its 1919 edition that a dynamo had been purchased for use at the grist mill to provide the business with good power. It being the first electrical installation in Iola. "It gave the village a more modern appearance if it was electricity," the report noted, "and we hope to see it in the future, now that our city is growing." -- A storm on September 4, blew a string of box cars off the end of the tracks near the potato warehouses.

In September a line shaft was installed between the saw mill and the grist mill, for driving the saw and milling equipment by belt during the winter months when the water head on the pond was low.

On May 5 the Wipf saw mill shipped three carloads of lumber. During the week of May 6 they loaded several cars of lumber for the Green Bay Lumber Company. A report in the 1915 edition of the *Iola Herald* reported 13 carloads of lumber were shipped to the Furniture Company in Green Point. In the December 6 edition it was reported that about 100 feet of lumber, lath and shingles were sold to A. G. Nelson of Green Bay. It had been a busy

Wipf operation also included the sale of ice, a January 1916 report indicating the saw mill was filling J. & C. Wipf's house that week.

On March 26 the flood gates on the Wipf mill dam were closed because the water level in the pond was very high, though it was indicated there was no danger of an overflow or break.

Bob Wipf passed away on October 14, 1947. Frederick C. Wipf experienced a small strike on April 19, 1947, when men at the mill asking for an increase from \$1.75 to the \$2.25 rate reported for road workers. "Their demands were refused and their services dispensed with," the *Iola Herald* reported. "Apparently there was some misunderstanding about the road work and the strikers may have made an inadvisable move."

Henry C. Wipf, son of Conrad and Elizabeth Wipf, died on April 27, 1947. Executors of the will of Henry C. Wipf sold the J. & C. Wipf business and property to Frederick C. Wipf on February 1, 1947. Frederick C. Wipf engaged his son, Frederick J., as a partner in the lumber business upon his return from working for a lumber company in northern Wisconsin and Michigan.

In the first week of August a new diving stand equipped with spring boards, was constructed at the bathing beach. A pond for local kids to use, was engineered by Frederick C. Wipf.

- 1931** -- A fire at the saw mill thought to have originated when "someone threw a cigarette up into the mill from the runway" on the evening of April 14 was "nipped in the bud."
- 1933** -- In the latter part of December a Studebaker six-cylinder automobile engine was installed in the basement of the feed mill to facilitate machinery operation during low water conditions.
- 1934** -- During the week of January 22 the saw mill underwent alterations for converting it into an ice house.



*Assembled for a sentimental picture at the reception and party held at the mill for the Historic Iola's Beginning book were author Lyle G. Mork, Wipf family descendent Richard Wipf, and Melody and Tom Fucik (standing at left, left to right). Previous owners Al and Judy Morey, and Stella Strand (seated left to right). Previous owners Al and Judy Morey, and Stella Strand (seated left to right),. chandler family descendent Michael Godgrey is shown holding his child, with his wife standing next to him and his father seated (grouping to the right).*

- 1936** -- The December 17 edition of the *Iola Herald* reported that the saw mill, the oldest landmark in the village, had been completely razed the previous week.
- 1947** -- Frederick C. Wipf passed away on July 6.
- 1949** -- Frederick J. Wipf and his wife, Claudia, became sole owners of the Wipf properties.
- 1963** -- The J. & C. Wipf grist mill and property were sold on February 18, the purchaser being Chester L. Krause on behalf of Lake Iola Estates.
- 1964** -- The final sale of Wipf business properties, located on the west side of North Main Street, north of Depot Street, was announced on March 12, the purchasers being Carl Waller and Bob Nassen of the Waller & Nassen service station, and Howard Bestul of Bestul Lumber and Fuel. The principal building was a barn-style lumber storage shed built in 1902 which no longer stands.
- 1966** -- The J. & C. Wipf mill property was sold to Robert and Stella Strand on May 16 for the purpose of establishing a museum of local history.

*(Continued on page 4)*