



Vintage Picture Postcards in IH&S Archive Recorded History of Early 20th Century Iola

Picture postcards were the “Text Message” communication vehicles of the day, in the early years of the 20th Century, when advances in the photographic science unfolded to make them economically practical for quick, brief and appealing communications. The affixing of a one-cent stamp on the address and message side of these cards sent them on the way to family and friends near and far. An interesting selection of vintage Iola images captured on such cards reposes in our archive.

The card below captures the main

business block of North Main Street under a bright mid-morning summer sun, crammed with horse-drawn rigs, probably anticipating a holiday parade that was in the offing. The view looks south down the west side of the street from the Depot Street corner, capturing what appears to possibly be a men's instrumental group aboard the first rig on the right, and a lady's choral group on the second rig, preparing for their role in the merriment of the occasion.

Note that the photographer has

incorporated the representation of an early biplane in flight above, on approach to landing at Iola, when the historic scene was printed as a card. Such small-town street scene postcards were often printed with similar “exaggerations,” a popular practice in those days, the others variously being streetcars, locomotives and similar non-germane elements. This card bears the postmark date; Aug. 1, 1916.

*For Additional Postcard Views
Turn to Page 4*



The **Iola Historical Society**

210 Depot Street
P. O. Box 412 - Iola, WI 54945

Established October 28, 1953

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Graphic Design by
Chain O' Lakes Litho

Historical organizations are established when a body of individuals gather to record, preserve and perpetuate the histories of their communities or realms of interest. Presently, the Iola Historical Society is in the midst of the 73rd year of service to its heritage – established October 28, 1953 – saluting its Swiss beginnings and paying tribute to its rich Norwegian germination. Through the first quarter century of its existence, the IHS held its meetings in member homes, focused on the recording of first- and second-person narratives of families and individuals of historical note.

In 1979, our first physical structure was acquired, the historic 1894 Iola & Northern Railroad depot, followed by the 1919 Helvetia Town Hall that was moved to the Historic Village & Museum Complex in 2002. These properties opened the opportunity for the IHS to begin reaching out for donations and loans of historical relics and records for archiving and exhibit development. Those original structures were complemented with the building of our reproduction one-room rural school in 1996, and the replication of Iola's 1901 Firehouse with a structure that was dedicated in 2007.

In recognition of the archive's growing contents and importance, in 2015 we built and developed an archival depository – the **Robert R. & Stella Strand Resource**

Center – to get our expanding archival holdings organized to facilitate their exhibit and research access. The board, at its June 2025 meeting, acted to designate another area in our main museum building – the **Lyle G. Mork Research Center** – to recognize our late member and officer's extended, unselfish and dedicated efforts initiating our archive structure and contents from 2006-2014, an effort that has of late become the focus of members Barbara Kobs and Patty Mork.

An example of the depth and importance of the archive is provided by the selected vintage Iola postcard spread incorporated in this issue of the *Window*. Many of the Iola views captured on these and other archived cards are not otherwise available to our generation. The archive was recently enhanced by a gift received from the estate of the late Joel Edler. Being an avid enthusiast of real photo postcards, Joel had built up a substantial Iola collection through his years of shopping antique malls, coin shops and similar resources. Several of these new additions to our archive are sprinkled into the presentation.

The point of this message . . . the IHS is an organic organization dedicated to capturing and sharing our community's heritage . . . one that builds and is ever changing over the passage of time!



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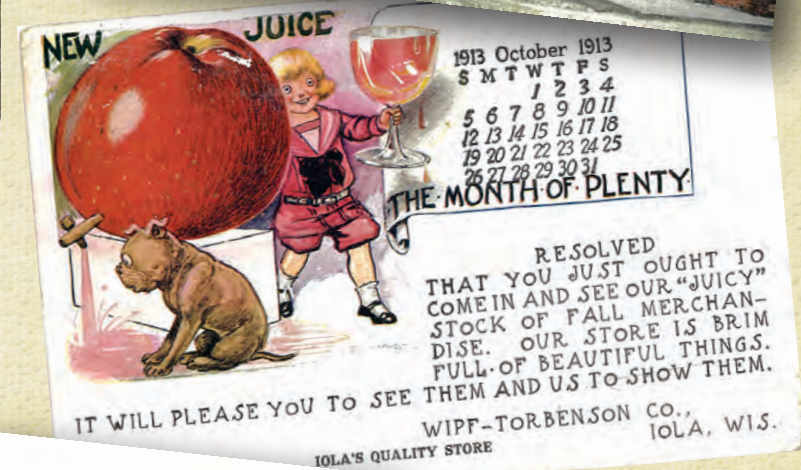
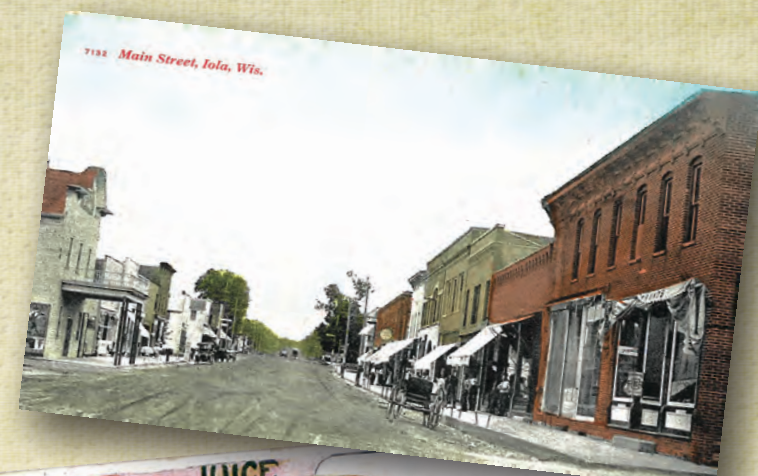
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Selected Vintage Postcard Views of Iola



Original Postcards
Reproduced here at
approx. two-thirds actual size

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The Iola Historical Society expresses its appreciation to the following individuals and organizations for contributing during the past quarter donations to our archive of historical relics, and/or cash gifts, or in-kind services support benefitting its operations:

October – November – December

Archival Donations of Historic Relics:

Joel Edler Estate (Iola and area vintage postcards in album), Trey Foerster (assorted I-S HS yearbooks 1994-2007), Sheila Olson (assorted I-S HS yearbooks (1984-1987), Sondra Olson (steamer trunk and Native American artifacts), Gene Knutson (IHS, Indianola 1919-20 yearbook).

Donations of Cash and In-Kind Services:

Sarah Abramson (cash for log cabin refurbishment), Louis & Louise Adams (cash for depot restoration), Mary Bennett (cash, unrestricted), Kathleen Bestul (cash for log cabin refurbishment), Larry & Alice Boe (cash, unrestricted), LeRoy & Carolyn Borth (cash, unrestricted), Countryside Propane (cash, unrestricted), George Cuhaj (cash, unrestricted), Mark & Terry Doll (cash, unrestricted), Don & Anita Faldet (cash for Machine Shed epoxy floor installation), Mary & Trey Foerster (cash for depot restoration), Linda George (cash, unrestricted), Lee & Sue Halverson (cash for Machine Shed epoxy floor installation), Marcia Helgeson (cash, unrestricted), Edward Heyes (cash to endowment), Homestead Realty (cash, unrestricted), Ruth Johnson (cash, unrestricted), Lashua Automotive (cash, unrestricted), Thomas Martin (cash, unrestricted), Chris Mortenson (cash, unrestricted), Marlene & Ron Netzler (cash, log cabin refurbishment, conversion of exhibit area), Barbara Pelnar (cash to endowment), Rae Renee Towne (cash to endowment; IMO Wayne Towne), David Zilz (cash, unrestricted).

2025/26 Supporting Members

The Iola Historical Society wishes to express special thanks and recognition to the following individuals and organizations for their dedicated Supporting Member financial contributor status for the ongoing operational activities of the Society:

Louis & Louise Adams, Scott & Karri Bestul, LeRoy & Carolyn Borth, Central Wisconsin Electric Cooperative, Mark & Ann Forseth, Mary & Charles Gipp, Donna Hooker, Iola & Rural Fire Service, Ruth C. Johnson, Lanna & Don Langdok, Dale & Robbie Louison, Thomas & Linda Martin, Too-Dars Diner.



2026 EVENTS SCHEDULE

Monday, February 23, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Monday, March 30, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Monday, April 27, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Monday, May 25, 2026

Noon – 2:00 pm Memorial Day
2026 Annual Pork Roast
Salute to Military Veterans

Tuesday, May 26, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Sunday, June 28, 2026

11:00 am – 2:00 pm
2026 Annual Strawberry Fest
Fundraiser & Collectibles Fair

Monday, June 29, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Monday, July 27, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Monday, August 31, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Monday, September 28, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
7:00 Program

Saturday, October 3, 2026

10:00 am – 2:00 pm
2026 Annual Taste of Norway
& Lost Arts Fair; Including
Community Gift & Craft Show

Monday, October 26, 2026

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
Last 2026 Business Meetings
2027 Board/Officer Elections
Discuss, Approve 2027 Budget
7:00 Program

Saturday, December 5, 2026

4:30 Post-Christmas Parade
Children Visit Santa Program
Hosted at IHS Machine Shed

Monday, December 14, 2026

2026 Annual IHS Christmas
Potluck Banquet & Program
Hosted at the Iola Mills Café

Monday, January 25, 2027

5:30 IHS Board Meeting
6:30 IHS Membership Meeting
First 2027 Business Meetings
7:00 Program

All Members and General Public Welcome to Attend All Meetings and Programs
(All IHS activities held at Depot Street complex unless otherwise indicated.)

Tending the Fields of the Family Farm

It appears grandpa, father and the kids of the third generation of a farm family, captured in this vintage photograph, were out tending the fields, while grandma and mother were off tending to household chores. The original print survives in the substantial farming archive resident in our Strand Resource Center. Is there anyone out there who could identify the family and its members, along with the location of the farm?

Share any knowledge you might have, or thoughts you could come up with on the identities of the family members by responding by phone: 715-445-IOLA (4652); by e-mail: IolaHistoricalSociety.com; by postal mail: IHS, P. O. Box 412, Iola, WI 54945; or stop by my office at 105 South Main Street. Responses will be shared in the Spring 2026 issue of the *Window*, and archived in our historical database following publication.



Family Sugarbush?

The sugarbush photograph published in the Fall 2025 issue of the *Window* garnered nary a single response. That's the first time that has happened in the nearly seven years that have passed since this feature was first introduced in the Summer 2019 issue. Check back and take another look . . . put your thinking cap on again . . . any thoughts you might have would be most welcome.

