
Linden HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PAST TO PRESENT CONNECTION LINDEN MASONIC LODGE 1877-2017



The Masonic Lodge building originally served as a business for several decades and in 1924 the Lodge purchased the structure and it has been their home since then.

Dodgeville businessman Tom Mueller will be our annual meeting program speaker on the topic of area Masonic lodges. Tom is the State Masonic historian and has been very active in the Dodgeville Lodge. Meeting will be in the Linden municipal building/fire station on Saturday, May 20 at 1:30 PM.

The Linden Masonic Lodge has stood the test of time. This year marks 140 years of official existence. The roots of the Masonic brethren in Linden goes back to a New Year's day meeting in 1876. That meeting was chaired by two Linden natives, John Wicks and J.J. Heathcock who were members of the long established Masonic Lodge #1 in Mineral Point

At that meeting a group of local men decided to petition for a Linden lodge with J.J. Heathcock, Fred Shaffer and Alfred Treglown as temporary officers. The Mifflin masons, lodge #153, was formally asked to add their recommendation to the petition, which they agreed to do. The three Linden men, named on the petition, were examined by Calvert Spensley the Worthy Master of the Mineral Point lodge who certified their qualifications.

The petition was then forwarded to the Grand Master on July 28, 1976. The Grand Master, however, wrote back and stated, "In view of your surroundings, being central between four different lodges, namely: Mineral Point, Mifflin, Ferrin (Montfort); and Dodgeville, that a dispensation should not be granted without consent of all four lodges."

The neighboring lodges all were in favor of Linden, but the consent requirement delayed the organization of the local lodge until February 13, 1877. Linden Lodge Number 206 Free and Accepted Masons, received its charter on June 13, 1877 and then a formal institution of the new lodge was held in Linden on July 2, 1877, 18 months after the first organizational step was taken.

The *Mineral Point Tribune* reported, " P. G. M. Pulford, of this city, was master of ceremonies, and a multitude of the mystic fraternity from different parts of the county were present, to do honor to the occasion, and partake of the bounteous repast spread by the brethren of the new lodge in one of Linden's many beautiful groves. Rev. D. Benson, of this city, was chief orator of the day, and delivered, according to accounts given by those present, one of the finest addresses on masonry and masonic policy ever listened to by the fraternity of Iowa County."

LINDEN MASONIC LODGE, CONTINUED

The first meeting place of the Linden lodge was on the upper floor of the Vivian Furniture store and funeral parlor. The Linden community building now occupies the spot. The second and current lodge headquarters was purchased in 1924. The eighteen charter members of Linden Lodge #206 were: J.F. Heathcock, Worthy Master; Fred Shaffer, Senior Warden; Alfred Tregloan, Junior Warden; R. S. Smith, Treasurer; J. W. Heathcock, Secretary; R. H. Wearing, Senior Deacon; William Rolling, Junior Deacon; George Weaver and H. J. Hicks, Stewards; James James, Tyler. Other members were: John Patterson, John Wicks, R. F. Richards, Thomas Wicks, David Morrison, William Varcoe, James Rule and John Cowling.

One hundred years later, in 1977, the Lodge had a roll call of sixty one members. Officers in that centenary year were: Roger Reddell, Worthy Master; Dennis Reddell, Senior Warden; William Spurley, Junior Warden; William Keeney, Senior Deacon; Charles Richards, Junior Deacon; Robert Alton, Secretary; Alva Smith, Treasurer; Ralph Osterndorf, Tyler; David Faull and William Dorner, Stewards; Elmer Weigel, Chaplin; George Maughan, Thomas Schaffer and Harold Roelli, Trustees.

The Linden lodge also had an auxiliary group, Order of the Eastern Star, which disbanded several years ago. The current membership of the Linden Masonic Lodge is 40. During the fall, winter and spring they host a pancake breakfast at the Lodge hall from which the proceeds benefit area charitable organizations such as the Hodan Center in Mineral Point, educational groups, and others. The benefit breakfasts, held the last Sunday of each month from September through May, feature the best tasting pancakes anywhere !



Interior of the Lodge. The public is used to seeing banquet tables set for the monthly breakfasts in this section. Photo courtesy of Stan Cutler.

BOYS HAD TIME ON THEIR HANDS WHEN SCHOOL LET OUT FOR SUMMER

When school was dismissed for the summer in the 1890's children had responsibilities and chores but there was some spare time to get into trouble. John W. Taylor in the June 1, 1894 issue of the *Linden Southwest Wisconsin* newspaper warned kids with this heads-up paragraph:

"The village authorities have requested us to say that playing ball in the streets, throwing stones at houses in the night time to scare people, card playing in the lanes and alleys on Sundays, have all to be stopped or vigorous prosecution of offenders will follow. So boys, look out!"

Can anyone help give us some background and time era for this beanie style hat? It has the red and white Linden High School colors with Linden proudly scripted on the hat. So far it is a mystery in how or what it was used for.



LHS FINANCIAL REPORT

For the year 2016, the Linden Historical Society took in \$2,242 in donations and memberships and had expenses of \$389.15.

We now have 60 paid members, as of February, 2017 we now have a balance of \$21,661.27 in our checking account. A break down of expenses for 2016 includes four printings of the newsletter at a total of \$144; postage \$96.00; printed check re-order \$14.15; website maintenance \$135.00.

Looking ahead to this year, we will start digitizing our archival collections for people to use on our website, we will be spending money to pay for help and equipment to complete the project, more information in our next newsletter.

Thank you to the following donors for the calendar year 2016: Jerry Holmes \$50; Donald Vial \$15; William and Lois Ralph \$1,500 and Sue Griffiths two coils of stamps (\$98) in memory of Stan Griffiths. Other donations were one roll of microfilm of the Linden Reporter newspaper by Jim Jewell; copy of a transcript of an oral history interview with Melvin Rickard by the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, donated by Marlene Wood; 1942 Linden High School annual from Vicki Gratz; set of four LHS annuals from Robin Lindner. Monetary donations are tax deductible, the Linden Historical Society is a 501-C3 non-profit organization and as such we operate under IRS guidelines. All donations are gratefully appreciated!

LINDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM

We are fortunate to have Tom Mueller, the State Masonic Historian, present a program on the Masonic Lodges past and present in Linden and Iowa County. It will be an interesting presentation....don't miss out, mark your calendars !

We also recognize the contributions of two board members whose terms expire and both have decided to retire from their duties. Catherine Whitford has been our treasurer and Judy Vivian was Secretary. They both went above and beyond what was expected in their respective duties and will be greatly missed. This means, of course, that we have openings for two board members. If you are at all interested in joining the group that directs this society please contact any board member for more information.

New board members will receive a "toolkit" to help bring them up to date. This kit or folder will have in it a copy of board minutes, treasurers reports from the last year; a copy of our by-laws; a copy of our Wisconsin sales tax exemption document ; and board policies. This coming year the board will adopt policies to cover conflict of interest, strategic planning, collection managements and others.

**REMEMBER: ANNUAL MEETING
SATURDAY MAY 20 AT 1:30 PM
LOCATION: LINDEN VILLAGE HALL/FIRE STATION ON
MAIN STREET**

A GLIMPSE AT MEMORIAL DAY IN LINDEN 1896

The observance of Memorial Day in Linden has always been an important event. Through the pages of the Linden newspaper the *Southwest Wisconsin*, of June 3, 1896 we are allowed a look back at the way the locals honored their veterans. In this short article three people are listed as speakers namely, Linden native Levi Pollard who was well known as a rousing and charismatic orator; John W. Taylor, the popular editor of the local newspaper and Rev. John Hardcastle a former Methodist minister in Linden, who was very well liked and invited back to speak. The "old Soldiers" mentioned were all from the Civil War era.

May, 1896: Memorial day was observed in Linden in a proper and fitting manner. The old soldiers formed at the town hall and headed by the Cobb Drum Corps, marched to the school house to meet and head the column of children in their march to the cemetery. After decorating the graves of soldiers the procession marched to S. S. Heathcock's grove adjacent where the other exercises, speaking and singing were to take place. After singing by some of the old soldiers, Mr. W. Adams, leader, President of the day, Rev. James made some appropriate remarks of welcome followed by Messrs. Pollard, Taylor and Rev. J. Hardcastle, as speakers, in the order named; the speeches being interspersed with singing and playing by the drum corps. The attendance was large and the weather all that could be desired.



Memorial Day in Linden. Judging from the parked cars and the new community building in the background this photo may be from 1959 or 1960. Left to right are: Whitford "Wissy" Faull; Tyrus "Bud" Faull; Lester Baker and Philip "Binks" Alton. Photo courtesy of Stan Cutler & Linden American Legion Post

LINDEN IS ON THE LITTLE FREE LIBRARY MAP

Linden has a library that is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week on Main Street. The Little Free Library is located in front of the American Legion building and was installed in the fall of 2016.

The attractive blue and gray, weatherproof wooden box houses a variety of books for children and adults. The idea for this miniature library started as a way for Southwest Tech in Fennimore to celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2017. Their goal is to have 50 Southwest Tech Little Free libraries installed throughout the Southwest Tech district in areas of need. Last year, a representative of SW Tech phoned Linden village President Tom Faull to enquire if there was an interest in having a Little Free Library here. Tom talked with Stan Cutler of the local Legion and that led to the sponsorship of the library by the Linden American Legion and the local Auxiliary. The two groups agreed to split the one time cost of \$250 to sponsor the project.

Local resident Marilyn Simons is the volunteer Steward of the library. On a weekly basis she checks the box to add and rotate books. The idea of the library is to take a book and return a book, a type of community exchange. Just up the street, at the Linden Post Office, more books are available in the lobby for residents to take home. The Linden Library is on the Little Free Library World Map online.



LHS RECEIVES MICROFILM READER/PRINTER

We gratefully acknowledge the donation received of a microfilm reader/printer from the Mineral Point Public Library in March. The Mineral Point Archives section of the library recently upgraded their research library with a new reader/printer and offered their older model to us. The Linden Historical Society currently has three rolls of microfilm on the *Southwest Wisconsin* newspaper; one roll of *The Conservative* newspaper; and one roll of the *Linden Reporter*. All newspapers mentioned were published in Linden.

The Linden Historical Society Archives are housed at the home of Jim Jewell and available for research by appointment. A longer range goal of our society is to have a permanent location in Linden.

LINDEN CEMETERY PROJECT NOW ONLINE

You can now search online the village cemetery in Linden. It is easy to use and worth a try for genealogists and just the curious like me to browse. Like anything, it takes just a bit of getting used to. In the Users manual they advise you to enter the last name and then the first name in the search box. When I tried this with several names I could not find any record. I tried again only using the Surname and found who I was looking for

A successful search of the cemetery records will reveal a location on the map, information from the grave stone and in many cases, a color picture of the marker. One of the people I searched for is a Dr. Albert Blanchard, a doctor who lived and worked in Linden. The online mapping showed me that he is buried in Section C, Block 2, his birth and death dates, and gave me a link to a photo of the grave marker.

Over the past few decades the Linden Historical Society has collected obituaries of many Linden area residents. Our goal is to list alphabetically the obituary names we have on our website at some point in the future.

To access the Linden cemetery go to the home page of the Southwestern Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission: swwrpc.org . At the bottom of that page click on, *Southwest Wisconsin Cemetery Mapping*. Then click on, *Village of Linden Cemetery Map*.



Large flags add a touch of respect to the Linden cemetery during the Memorial day weekend

******PHOTO AND DOCUMENT DONATIONS ALWAYS APPRECIATED******

If you have any photos or documents on Linden area history we would love to make a copy for our archives. Photos and documents can be scanned and returned to you if desired. Contact either the President or Vice-President listed below, who just happen to be next door neighbors in "East Linden".

How To Contact Us

President & Newsletter editor:

Jim Jewell, 2073 Sunny Slope Road, Mineral Point, WI 53565. Phone: (608) 623-2772.

Email: minerjim7@gmail.com

Vice-President:

Randy Baker, 2212 Sunny Slope Road, Mineral Point, WI 53565, Phone: (608) 574-4067.

Treasurer:

Catherine Whitford, 151 Jail Alley, Mineral Point, WI 53565 (608) 987-9930.

Secretary:

Judy Vivian, 2178 Hwy 39, Dodgeville, WI 53533 Phone: (608) 623-2293

Board member:

Lisa Springer, 2776 Wearne Rd., Mineral Point, WI 53565, Phone: (608) 341-8686.

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2073 Sunny Slope Road

Mineral Point, WI 53565

