

# LINDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## HISTORIC LINDEN FIRE ALARM BELL GETS FACE LIFT



*Bell represents tangible village and fire department history.*

In front of the Linden village hall and fire station is a restored alarm bell once used to alert citizens and firemen of a fire or other emergency. It was formerly located at the old fire house on the corner of West Main and Elizabeth streets.

Joseph F. Goldsworthy, a Linden news correspondent for the *Dodgeville Chronicle*, reported in the March 8, 1912 issue, "The village fathers have installed a fine new fire alarm bell during the past week. This bell is one of the deep, loud-toned ones, and was badly needed in the village."

In my memory this bell was situated on the ground by the former fire station. It was, at times, a temptation for kids to ring it and then run away. Originally, the bell had a much higher position with a long rope attached for ringing and sounding the alarm.

The Linden correspondent for the *Mineral Point Democrat*, told of a close call when the bell was rung in December, 1914 just two years after installation. "While John Faull was ringing the fire bell on Monday evening for a meeting of the firemen, the clapper fell from the bell, a distance of forty feet, and buried itself in the ground at his feet—a narrow escape for John."

This bell is retired from sounding alarms, modern sirens do that job now. Village workers Randy Kitelinger and Kevin Liddicoat thought the bell should be preserved and placed in a more prominent place. The striking colors of the bell are from powder coating rather than paint. The powder coating, applied in Dubuque, will be longer lasting and more durable than paint.

## FIRE ALARM BELL, CONTINUED

Randy said he could not find any foundry markings or identifications on the bell. I was unable to locate the village board minutes from 1912 which may have told where the bell came from and how much it cost. That part of the bell remains a mystery for now.

The reason for the purchase of the bell may have originated for the need to send a loud alarm that could reach most if not all of the village. It is possible that a series of arson fires in the months that preceded the installation of the bell prompted the purchase.

In November, 1911 the large barn of Dick Richards was found to be on fire at 1 a.m. on a Saturday. Origins of the fire were suspicious. A report of the fire on the front page of the *Dodgeville Chronicle* stated, in part, "The people (of Linden) quickly responded and found the large barn of Dick Richards to be in flames. Heroic work was done but it was impossible to save the barn which was entirely consumed by the flames together with a fine, large team of work horses and some hay and feed. The village waterworks again proved its efficiency and assisted greatly in confining the fire to the barn."

A few weeks later another front page story on the December 22, 1911 *Dodgeville Chronicle* spoke of the ongoing threat of an arsonist.

"On Monday afternoon a blanket soaked in kerosene oil was found near the livery barn

of Clarence Thomas at Linden, and circumstances seemed to point to a projected attempt at incendiarism. A number of men sat up all night to watch the premises in the hope of capturing any person who should attempt to destroy the property.

Nothing developed, but so strong is the conviction that something was on foot that this is attributed rather to the fact that the elaborate precautions had frightened off the fire bug, than to any doubt of the existence of such an individual.

It appears that the village has recently suffered several fires apparently of incendiary origin, and one powder explosion unexplainable by any other hypothesis. Resulting sentiment is almost unanimous that there is in the village some person who has been guilty of setting the fires, and will possibly attempt injury to other properties."

There was a break in the fire activity in Linden for over a month. Then on March 22, 1912 a large barn on the George Harker farm, four miles Northeast of Linden on Highway 18 was set on fire around midnight. Could it have been the same person who set the Linden fires? Did the new Linden fire bell act as a deterrent? It also appears that the Linden arsonist of the 1911-12 era took his secret to the grave, I don't know of any resulting arrest or conviction of anyone for the suspicious fires.

## **IN MEMORIAM**

**JOYCE I. GRUNDY**, 91, died March 25, 2019. Funeral services were held at the Soman-Larson funeral home in Montfort. Burial was in Linden cemetery.

**TAMMY LOOS**, 51, formerly of Linden, was killed in a car accident on March 27, 2019. Tammy is survived by three children; her sister Elizabeth Larson (Mark Sieling) of Edmund and her mother Susan (Terry) Flynn of Linden. Funeral services were held on April 1, 2019 at Holy Family Catholic Church in Davenport, Iowa. Burial was in Rose Hill cemetery in Buffalo, Iowa.

**JAMIE RAE (SILVERS) CUTLER**, age 41 passed away on April 3, 2019. She was the daughter of Stan and Donna (Hackett) Cutler. She was currently employed at Summit Golf Brands. Jamie and Galen Silvers married on May 31, 1997 and they had three children: Kelly, Gracelyn and Hunter. Funeral services were held at the Gorgen-McGinley funeral home in Dodgeville, burial in Linden cemetery.

**JEANNE MARIE TREDINNICK**, age 71, of Verona, formerly of Linden, passed away from lung cancer on April 8, 2019. Her parents were the late Charles and Dorothy Tredinnick. Memorial services were held at the Linden Methodist Church, Inurnment in the Linden cemetery.

**MARY JANE (RULE) GORDON**, age 85, of Madison passed away on April 27, 2019. She was born on July 10, 1933 in Linden, daughter of Orville and Christina (Martin) Rule. Mary graduated from Linden High School. She married Paul Lindauer until his death and then married James H. Gordon. Funeral services were held at the Monona United Methodist Church.

**PAUL DAVID IHUS**, 75, of Linden died on May 10, 2019. Paul was a dairy farmer in Iowa County for 25 years and a long haul trucker. He is survived by his four daughters and two sisters. Funeral services were held at the New Hope Lutheran Church in Blanchardville on May 16.

**MICHAEL R. LAROSA**, 64, of Linden passed away on May 19. Visitation was held at Gorgen funeral home in Mineral Point. Mike had lived in Linden since 1984.

## **YOUR STORIES NEEDED FOR FUTURE NEWSLETTERS**

Everyone reading this has a story to tell about the Linden area. We want to hear yours. It might be a school memory, shopping at Faull's general store, summertime fun in the Linden area, working on the farm, a special memory of your parents or family and friends, the possibilities are endless.

It doesn't have to be a story of 100 years ago, local history includes what happened last week, yesterday or decades ago. There are also no excuses. You can't say, "but I'm not a writer." That hasn't stopped your newsletter editor. Just write down your memory as though you were telling it out loud to a friend, that's simple enough!

It is not good to hear from just one person (me) all your voices and memories matter. Deadline for the next newsletter is September 15.

## **GIFTS RECEIVED BY LINDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

**Extracts from the Diary of Richard Wearne**, selected by Ralph P. Neale. This diary is an important first person account of life in the Linden area circa 1848 by the Cornish family Richard Wearne. Ralph Neale is a great great grandson of the diary author who lives in Mont Albert, Australia.

**Canon Copier**, donated to the LHS by the Iowa County Historical Society. This copier will enable us to enlarge or reduce copies of archival materials or images.

**Lettie Tredinnick 1908 Graduation:** Virginia Kuehn Pike donated to the LHS the 1908 Linden High School graduation dress that Lettie wore; a photo of Lettie; her graduation speech; and a 1908 commencement program. Will likely make use of this gift as part of a newsletter article or program.

**Micro-film reader/printer, Scan Pro 3000 model.** By anonymous board member.

All donations gratefully accepted by the Linden Historical Society.

Website: [lindenhistoricalsociety.com](http://lindenhistoricalsociety.com)

## **2019 ANNUAL MEETING AND PROGRAM WELL RECEIVED**

The Linden Historical Society annual meeting and program on the Linden business community took place on May 18. Three board members were re-elected: Florence Wasley, Lisa Springer, and Robin Lindner. Treasurers report was given by Robin Lindner. Our balance on hand at day of meeting was \$24,697.62 .

Mention was made of the progress in getting a listing of Linden area obituaries on the society website. Volunteer recognition was given to Sally Hartwig who put in a lot of hours on the obituary project; also helping with the same undertaking were Becky Richards and Karla Baker. Chuck Pound of Sirius Sunlight in Mineral Point put in many hours to set up a searchable database for the obituary program. His bill was only a fraction of his labor, which no one else could have done. Paula Griffiths also helped in the process of making the database work. In addition Paula does the graphics and set up on the quarterly newsletter. A hearty thank you to all! The powerpoint program was presented by Jim Jewell and Randy Baker to a good turnout of guests.

## **TRIO MINE HAD HIGH HOPES & RACINE MONEY BACKING IT**

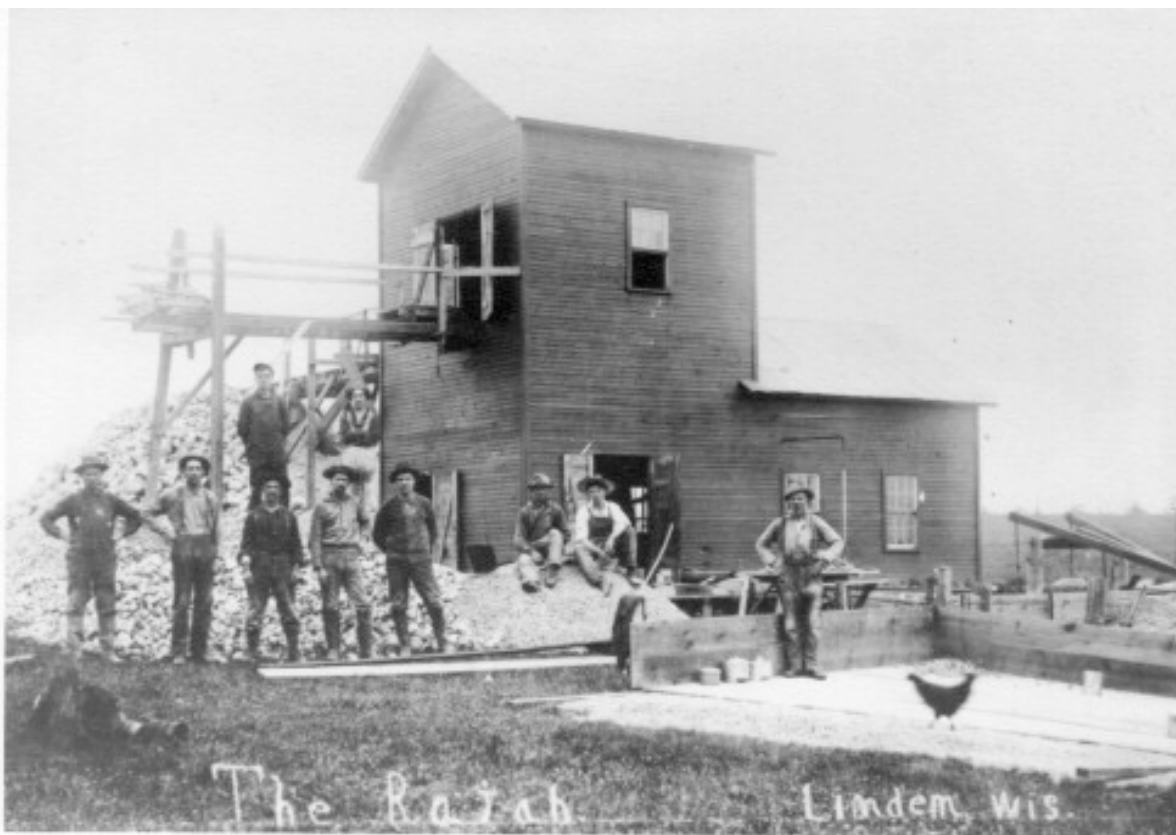
In 1904 a trio of three experienced Linden miners, James N. Vial, Nelson Hillary and Carroll Guthrie had their eyes on a 27 acre parcel in Linden known as the Poad land. This property had been an early mining site in Linden and yielded up many tons of lead ore in the 1830's and 1840's.

For decades the land remained vacant and unworked, old digging holes were numerous with matching rock piles and burrows. The three miners believed this property across the road from the school could be an untapped treasure chest. To the west was the old Ross mine, a true bonanza on what was locally called the Heathcock range, or simply Old Range. To the east, just across Peddler's Creek was the Glanville mine another successful mine. Just beyond the Glanville mine, William Ross was proving up the "new" Ross mine which would end up with a very successful 15 year run as a mine.

It was said among Linden miners that, "when one got hold of the hand of the Old Range he had hold of the hand of Dame Fortune herself." The trio of three miners could feel the hand of Dame Fortune in theirs and leased the 27 acres for five years and immediately contracted for churn drills to prospect and prove up the site. Drill cuttings revealed promising deposits of lead and zinc. The men put down a shaft, bought a pump to handle the incoming water flow and at 75 feet down hit a 40 foot wide vein of zinc ore.

## TRIO MINE, CONTINUED

What was now needed to develop this property was a new mill and operating equipment which would take far more money than the three miners had. In October, 1905 the Trio mining company was organized with E.C. and J.J. Fiedler, J.A. Messerole of Mineral Point and the original three miners. Stock shares had sold out, some to Linden locals and a large number to Racine buyers, and brought in \$45,000 for operating capital. On November 2, 1905 stockholders elected the following as board directors: W. C. Palmer of Racine; H. N.



*The 50 ton Trio mill after it was sold and re-assembled at the Rajah mine on Vial Road. It was said when the Trio closed down they had a mill without a mine and the Rajah had a mine without a mill.*

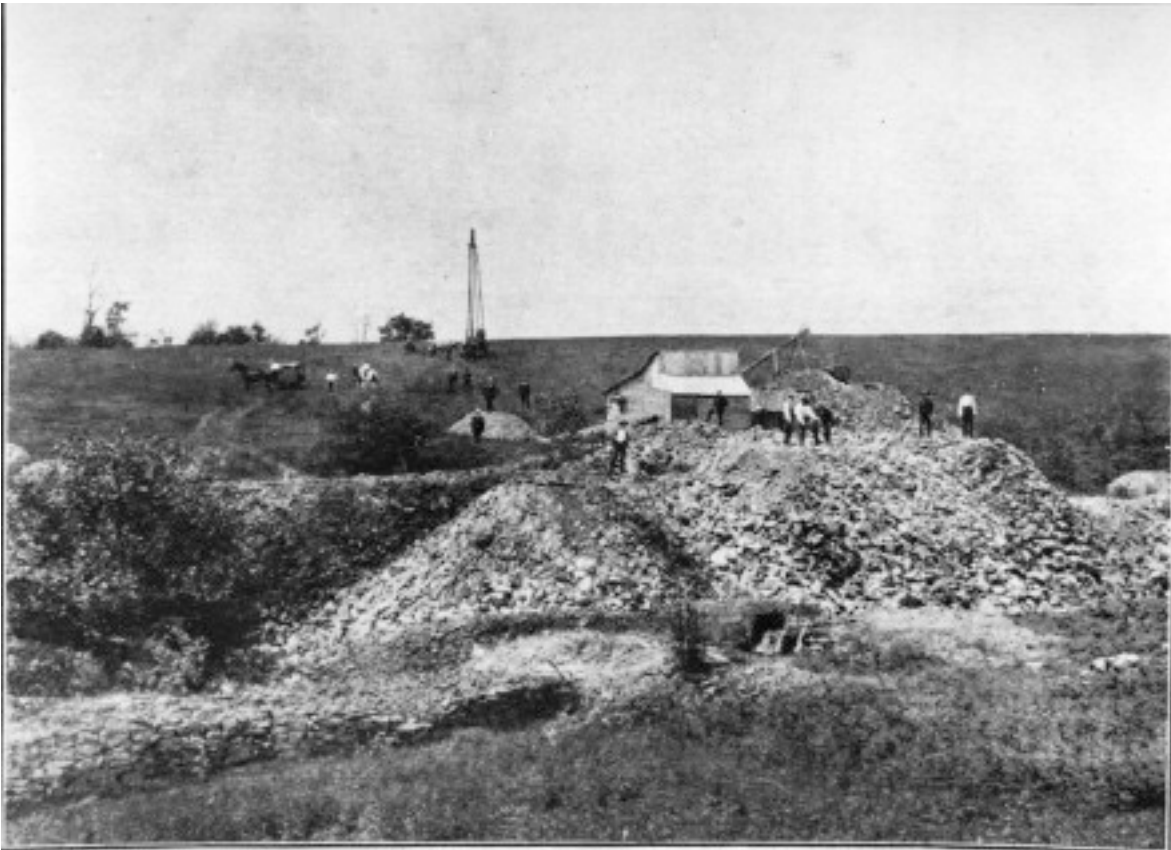
Laflin of Milwaukee; J. A. Messerole of Mineral Point; Robert Hawke (Catherine Whitford's grandfather) and John Vivian of Linden. Hawke was then elected President and Joseph Fiedler secretary and treasurer.

The board voted to award the contract to build a new 50 ton mill to a Milwaukee firm, a new boiler, engine, air compressor and other equipment for inside the building arrived at the Mineral Point & Northern rail depot one quarter mile from the site. There were over 100 tons of unmilled ore waiting on site for the new facility to process it. With this new development the price of Trio mining stock increased from \$1.00 to \$1.50 bid per share with most holders refusing to sell. The future looked bright, but mining and Dame Fortune can be fickle. The quantity of ore did not hold up to expectations and Racine investors got nervous when returns on investment did not hold up to earlier hyperbole.



## TRIO MINE, CONTINUED

Miners, like farmers, were always optimistic and a brief report in the trade journal, *Mining World*, in July, 1907 proclaimed, "The Trio is now running on a fine body of zinc ore and is giving new hope to many discouraged investors."



*Early view of Trio mine in far background is a drilling machine that helped prove up the ore deposit*

The 'Old Range' ore body on the Trio property narrowed and at the same time the market price of zinc dropped almost in half. In October, 1907 the Trio mine went broke. At the foreclosure sale state Assemblyman William Bell of Racine bought the property with an aim to re-organize the company. Most of the stock was held by people from Racine and the mine was renamed the Racine-Linden mining company.

The new company limped along for over a year and a half with mediocre results until late in 1908 when the board decided to stop mining on the site. The mill was dis-assembled and sold to the Rajah mine, located on the North end of Linden on Vial road. The Mineral Point Zinc company bought out the Rajah mine and when that mine closed the same mill was dis-assembled and moved to a company mine at Highland.

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**LINDEN FROLIC DAYS  
JULY 25TH - 28TH**

**IOWA COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
ICE CREAM SOCIAL  
THURSDAY, JULY 25TH 5-7PM  
LEY MEMORIAL PAVILLION, HARRIS PARK  
DODGEVILLE**

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

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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. Membership in the Linden Historical Society is \$10 per year, lifetime membership \$100. Make check payable to Linden Historical Society and send to Treasurer Robin Lindner.

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**HOW TO CONTACT US**

**[LINDENHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM](http://LINDENHISTORICALSOCIETY.COM)**

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