
LINDEN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OLD LINDEN TRUCK NEW CENTERPIECE IN DOWNTOWN LINDEN



This 1937 Chevy has a place of honor and rest in Linden. Originally owned by "Ozzie" Clauer who also maintained the clock in the church steeple in the background.

by Lisa Springer

If you are driving through Linden you may notice an old rusted, rather threatening looking truck, showing a lot of patina, parked on the corner of highway 39 and main street. Is it waiting to be restored? Is it a conversation piece? Is it for fun? This is hard to say, but it came with Linden history attached.

The truck was originally owned by Orville Clauer who lived West of Linden on the farm where Bill Spurley now resides. Ralph Springer bought the truck at a farm sale about 40 years ago. It was parked in a small pasture below the farmhouse and surrounded by tall weeds. It must have been parked there after its usefulness was considered over. The stock rack had rotted badly and was listing to one side. Just the sort of thing to catch Ralph Springer's eye, after all the motor still turned over at the time.

Sadly, the truck came home to rest in a pasture east of the buildings on the Springer farm near Linden and the cows used it as a side rub. It had weeds around it but never as tall as the ones it was rescued from.

NEW CENTERPIECE, CONTINUED

The original oak wood was sawed on the Clauer farm and the stock rack was built by the family. It was a substantial stock rack when used to haul cattle. The truck is a 1937 Chevy. The radiator is very special with a honey comb pattern instead of straight fins like models of today.

There were seven children in the Clauer family, six boys and one girl. They were Darrold, Lonnie, Orville, Earned, Neldine, Charlie, Henrie, and Minnie. Orville drove an old Model A Ford Sedan. He would pick up neighbor children and take them to movies in Dodgeville. The Clauer family was related to the Golman family, their neighbors across the road. The Golman's had an old barn with modern gas lights. The house and chicken house also shone brightly powered by gas.

The house the Clauer family lived in now houses the Bill Spurley family. One half of the house was moved to the farm from Wisconsin street in Linden and originally was part of the old boarding house of the Dark Horse mine.

It is also fitting that the truck sits across the street from the Linden Methodist Church. Orville, known as "Ozzie", fixed and wound the town clock in the steeple of the Methodist Church. The weight that ran the clock didn't go all the way down through the main floor so the clock had to be wound every six days instead of seven days as originally planned. That made winding the clock a little bit harder to keep track of instead of just maintaining it every Sunday. One day Larry Dale Schultz was getting parts from Ralph and asked him what he planned to do with the old truck. Ralph gave it to him with the aside to his wife and

author, "This should make you happy you are always complaining about the old stuff around here." So down the road it went. Larry lost no time in picking it up. The old truck soon sported a hook for towing and then later in the summer a box full of beautiful flowers. Just wait until you see what it has for Christmas. Plans are in the works.



The grill is mostly intact and looking good on the '37 Chevy.



The 1937 Chevrolet bow tie shows decades of patina.

VETERANS DAY TRIBUTE

During World War I the U.S. government had a policy for all able bodied men to either “Work or Fight.” This meant working in an essential wartime industry which included agriculture and mining. If you did not have a job Uncle Sam expected you to serve in the armed forces.

David S. Mackay, a partner in the Mackay mining company here could have stayed home. He instead chose to enlist as did others from Linden. Mackay was secretary of the Linden Commercial Club, similar to a Chamber of Commerce. Here is his letter of resignation from the group just before going into the army.

“I am going into the service of Uncle Sam to do my little part to keep the great machine of civilization and christianity from being demolished by the terrible machine of Prussianism, militarism and kizarism so I must say good bye to all of you with whom I have spent a very pleasant two years. I have enjoyed my sojourn here and have met and come to know some people whom I shall never forget and who have helped me in many ways which I will never be able to repay but for which I am very appreciative and thankful. I

trust I am leaving friends and a few enemies behind and that I will have the pleasure of coming back to visit Linden when the mining business is booming again and the village is experiencing great prosperity. With many thanks for the way you took me into your circle when I was a ‘stranger in a strange land’. I must take leave of you all with much regretting, D. S. Mackay.”

Mackay was replaced as Commercial Club secretary by Sam Jelliffe who would only accept a temporary assignment because he too was going into the service.

VETERANS
DAY



1916 MOVIES OF THE LINDEN MINES

A one paragraph article in the June 13, 1916 *Dodgeville Chronicle* revealed, “Motion picture photographers came from Milwaukee to Linden last week and took several reels of pictures of mining operations.”

Eleven mines were in operation within a one mile radius of Linden in 1916 and a legendary mining promoter Levi Pollard had that same year started the first movie production company in Wisconsin. Levi was born in Linden to William and Mary (Rule) Pollard and they operated a hotel on the site of the present day village hall/fire station.

In addition to being a broker and investor in local mines, Levi was an attorney and another passion he had was acting. He

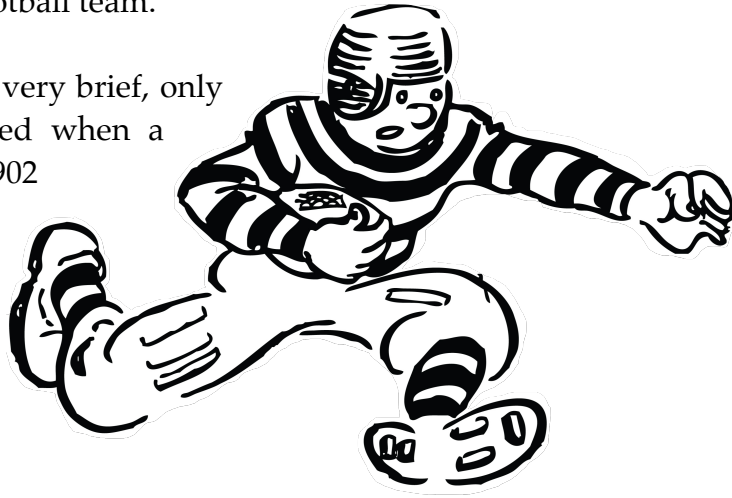
performed in vaudeville and on stage in Milwaukee where he became a good friend of Jack Saxe. Saxe invested in Linden mines with Pollard and also purchased mines in Montfort and Highland during the WW I mining boom. Saxe would go on to own a string of movie theaters in the Milwaukee area, helped along with his mining profits.

It is very likely that Pollard used his movie production company to film the Linden mines. What happened to the movies filmed here is a mystery. Pollard’s movie company was unsuccessful and the films could have been destroyed. If they survive somewhere they would need to be restored.

WHEN LINDEN HIGH SCHOOL HAD A FOOTBALL TEAM

Football season is well underway with the Packers, Badgers and area high school teams battling it out. Linden High School was well known for its baseball and basketball teams but not as well known was their football team.

The football experience at Linden High School was very brief, only one year way back in 1902. Excitement prevailed when a student wrote in the school news in the October 8, 1902 Linden Southwest Wisconsin newspaper: "We have heard the football team is getting to be very enthusiastic. We have also seen their photograph, perhaps they think it is best to have them taken before they play any games as some of their number might be classed as 'missing'."



The photo apparently did not survive and is among the "missing". There were at least eight boys on the team: Will Masters, Arch and Will Tredinnick, Alva Smith, John Taylor, Clyde Faull, George Alexander and Frank Batten. There was mention of a Treloar in one of the games. It would seem plausible that the LHS team played eight man football although this was never revealed in any of the game highlights.

The Southwest Wisconsin of October 22 reported, "The long expected football supplies have arrived at last. The boys have secured a game with the Mineral Point team and will play their first game at Mineral Point."

The LHS Cornish Miners had a baptism of fire when they traveled to Mineral Point for their inaugural game against their seasoned, experienced and larger opponents. The LHS student reporter for the school news stated, "Black eyes are all the rage because the football team have them. The game with Mineral Point resulted in a score of 52-0 in favor of Mineral Point. This is only an estimate. The goals were scored so fast the scorer could not keep up." (*Southwest Wisconsin* Oct. 29, 1902)

The *Mineral Point Tribune* was a bit more diplomatic in their summary of the game. "Last Saturday afternoon, on the fair grounds in this city, our high school football team administered a crushing defeat to the Linden Highs. The final score was 52-0. The visitors were simply paper before their opponents. Though fighting pluckily till the last Linden could not prevent the Pointers from tearing through the line and around the end at will. Mineral Point has a promising squad of players and should put up an excellent showing in their next games."

The Mineral Point high school team had been established in 1895 with their very first game against Dodgeville and was likely the first football game played in Iowa County.

LINDEN FOOTBALL, CONTINUED

Undaunted by their lopsided loss at Mineral Point the LHS team traveled to Highland for their next contest against not their high school team but the Highland City team composed of older and likely larger and stronger players. Perhaps the team motto was, "What doesn't kill you makes you stronger."

The local Linden newspaper reported, "Saturday the High School team met their second defeat. They went over to Highland and played against the city team there, being defeated 11-0. The Linden team put up a strong game and undoubtedly would have won had they not been playing against such odds." (*Southwest Wisconsin* Nov. 5, 1902)

Game number three for the Cornish Miners of LHS was a home game against Livingston High School and maybe the hard won experience of their first two games was a benefit. Linden won that game 18-0.

Next game up for Linden featured going up against a combined team with players from the Platteville Normal college and Livingston. Linden put up a hard fight but lost 10-5.

Linden hosted Mineral Point high school in their next game and were defeated 28-0. The *Mineral Point Tribune* declared, "The (Mineral Point) boys say that Linden has improved wonderfully since they played here three weeks ago, when they were defeated 52-0."

The final game of the season, as well as the end of Linden High School football, took place on Thanksgiving day against Montfort High School, which Linden won 16-0. The season was celebrated that evening with a dance, over 60 tickets sold, at Hick's Hall.



It is possible Linden High School's home football games were played on the North side of the frame school. This plot of ground was used in 1903-04 for intramural games.

LINDEN FOOTBALL, CONTINUED

In 1903 and 1904 Linden had an intramural football program for students that was played on ground owned by Mr. Kislingbury adjacent to the school house. In 1903 mention was made that a deal was struck with Kislingbury that if the students harvested his corn crop they could use his field for football.

In the very brief newspaper reports of the high school football games of 1902 there was never a mention of a coach or where the games at Linden were played. This one and only year of LHS football preceded both the WIAA and the formation of any area high school athletic leagues by about 20 years. The only other nearby high schools close to the enrollment of Linden that had football teams were Livingston and Montfort, both games that Linden won. The four defeats Linden suffered were David and Goliath type match-ups, showing they were a courageous group of kids, willing to take on all comers.

LANDMARK BUILDING RAZED IN DOWNTOWN LINDEN



During the last week of September the last building standing from a group of four came down. The tin siding and other materials were recycled.

During the last week of September the Pardtown Pub building on Main street was torn down. It was determined to be structurally unsound and the only remedy was demolition.

LANDMARK BUILDING, CONTINUED

Larry Dale and Mandy Schultz bought the property earlier this year. Efforts were made to re-use and recycle materials from the old structure. Since at least 1890 this building was home to Isaac Jacobs clothing and dry goods store. The shop offered the latest styles of clothes to men, women and children. The Jacobs family was well respected and loved by the entire community. The store closed in late 1920. For a number of years it was Bentzler's barber shop. Lester Baker took over the building and converted it into a bar around 1962. After Lester retired several people continued to operate it as a bar until recently when it sat vacant.



It is likely this photo was taken in the early 1900's. Starting at the far left is the old Pardtown Pub recently demolished, just up the street was a structure that was a restaurant and it was torn down in the early 1940's. Next building was the Faull tavern owned by Babe and Hilda Faull and was torn down in late 1970s. The final brick building was known for decades by Hancock's and featured a butcher shop on the ground floor, the second story was known as Hancock's Hall and was used frequently for programs and meetings. This imposing structure came down in 1942.

Isaac Jacobs was a progressive retailer in Linden with moderately priced clothing and shoes that a blue collar community could afford.

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We are also displaying our line of

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Space does not permit us to quote prices but come in and see for yourself.

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I. JACOBS - LINDEN

***** 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. 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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