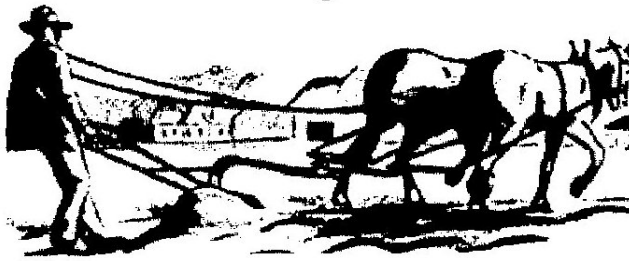


Wheatland Plowing Match Association



FOR THE PRESERVATION OF OUR RURAL HERITAGE

Volume 14, No. 1

Rural Heritage News

Winter, 2004

President's Report

Annual Meeting November 13, 2003

Greetings one and all, young and old.

Another year has flown by, albeit a good year. Despite lower attendance, we still had a successful Spaghetti Supper and Farmer's Pig Roast.

The two seatings for our Spaghetti Dinner worked well at Zion. The change was a result of having a smaller serving area. We cut some costs at our Pig Roast by utilizing more volunteers, buying and serving all the beverages and having Tammy, Ron and helpers feed us breakfast.

Our good friend Roger Claar, the mayor of Bolingbrook, helped immensely with our profitable Pig Roast. He provided the site ready to go with porta-jons, wash basins, meat cutting shelter, big tent, fence posts, generator with fuel and a graded access road. Paul Lehman of Macon Corporation provided some of our site space for parking.

After setting up for the spaghetti supper this spring, many of us cleaned up our monument site on 119th St., trimmed all the shrubs and planted a wonderful Hackberry tree that Wagners gave us.

I think the most important events of the year were:

1. The development of our wonderful Internet web site, Wheatlandplowing.org. Our deepest thanks to John Bushman, his students and Ruth who worked on the web site and a generous donation from Lucent to fund the project.

2. Awarding Larry Gregory, Elaine Ferry and Earl Meisinger with our first three Lifetime Memberships, and Al Diehl with our first honorary membership.

We gave our usual support to the "Teachers on an Ag-science Bus" and had a fun, though wet, time in the Naperville Labor Day Parade. We look forward to it next year.

We continue to seek help and suggestions from all members to attain our goals, to stay current and to always improve.

Thanks so much for being here and for your help and support year after year. I pray that in some way I have had a positive effect as your president and servant.

Sincerely,

Tim Drendel
President WPMA

2004 WPMA Board Members!

WPMA Officers

President, Wilbert Hageman: 630-904-0796
Vice-President, Tim Drendel: 630-553-5411
Treasurer, Bob Hamman: 630-420-2243
Secretary, Louise Wiesbrook: 630-554-4779
Correspondence, Mary Ann Bobosky: 630-357-1234

Board Members

Karen Allen, Tammy Brigel, Karen Dietzman,
Jerry Feldott, Ray Keller

Committee Chairman

Publicity, Tammy Brigel: 630-554-8114
Membership, Frank Keller: 630-554-6628
Historical, Ruth Hageman: 630-904-0796
Nominating, Earl Meisinger: 630-904-0787
Site Committee, Wilbert Hageman: 630-904-0796
Scholarship, Mary Ann Bobosky: 630-420-8040
Special Events, Stu Carstens: 630-393-2679
By-Laws, Earl Meisinger: 630-904-0787
Equipment, Ray Keller: 630-553-1973

Newsletter Coordinator, Tammy Brigel: 630-554-8114

Membership Dues Now Due!

Dues are now requested to keep your Rural Heritage News and WPMA membership current.

Please check your address label on this newsletter. The year that your membership expires is after your name. If your name isn't followed by the numbers "04" or "05," then please renew your membership today by filling out the enclosed membership form. Please send your dues at the same time.

If you return your renewal by February 15, you will be eligible for the drawing at the Spaghetti Supper. At that time, two sets of two tickets each for the Farmers' Pig Roast will be drawn. You need not be present to win.

President's Message

As your new president for the year 2004, I would like to thank Tim Drendel for his dedication to the Board as President for the last two years. In addition, a big thank you to Mary Ann Bobosky and Steve Hyett for serving on the Board of Directors for the past six years. The organization has benefited greatly by their involvement.

We welcome our two new board members, Karen Allen and Jerry Feldott, who will be great additions to the organization. Their bios will follow this article.

Our goal for 2004 is to strengthen our membership and enlist everyone's help in finding and acquiring a permanent location for the organization. We have accumulated several old pieces of farm machinery and memorabilia that need a permanent storage place. Our site committee has been talking with the Bolingbrook Mayor and members of his staff about the possibility of being a part of the Bolingbrook Historic Farm, where the Farmers Pig Roast was held the past two years.

We look forward to a prosperous new year for the Wheatland Plowing Match Association and all members of the organization.

Wilbert Hageman
WPMA President

New Board Members

Karen Allen

Karen Allen, daughter of Wilbert and Ruth Hageman, was born and raised in Naperville. She and her husband, Ken, live in south Naperville on the farm that was once owned by Carl & Ruth Hageman, where they still raise a few cattle. Karen was a 4-H leader of the Naperville Go-Getters for 5 years.

She now is manager for Heritage FS Inc. The Barn Feed & Garden Center in Plainfield.

Karen has been active in the WPMA for many years helping behind the scenes at the annual Pig Roast & the Spaghetti Supper.

Jerry Feldott

Jerry Feldott is a native to the Naperville area. His family was a Naperville farm family. The Feldott family were past owners of the Sports Bowl & Feldott's Plateau of Naperville.

Jerry is strongly involved in "Leadership Roles" with many community affairs. Among them:

- WPMA, Newly appointed board member
- Citizens Appreciate Police and Fire Dept., Chairman
- Rotary Club of Naperville, President Elect
- Naperville Rotary Charities, Board Member/Secretary, House of Dreams
- Rotary Club of Naperville Oktoberfest, Chairman

Jerry resides in Naperville with his wife and two children, Kristen and Mike. He has been involved in both Commercial and Residential Real Estate for over 15 years and is presently a Real Estate Broker with John Green Realtor.

Spaghetti Supper Offers Two Separate Seatings

Mark your calendars!
4 p.m. and 5:30 p.m., Sat., May 1

This year's Spaghetti Supper slated for May 1 will be at the Zion Lutheran Church where we celebrated our heritage last year. The Zion Lutheran Church is located at 11007 S. Book Road in Naperville.

We will again offer two seatings. This will accommodate those of you that prefer an earlier supper. We will sell tickets for a 4:00 p.m. seating and also a 5:30 p.m. seating.

Remember the Spaghetti Supper supports the WPMA Scholarship Fund. Being able to help our youth acquire higher education is very important to us.

Come enjoy visiting with family and longtime friends. Invite new friends and neighbors. The menu includes the usual family-style spaghetti, sauce, salad, garlic bread and dessert served with a beverage.

Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$3 for children 8 years and under. Tickets will be sold in advance only.

Absolutely no tickets will be sold at the door.

Ticket availability:

Heritage FS Barn Feed and Garden Center: 630-904-2175.

Karen Allen: 630-904-0667.

Ruth Hageman: 630-904-0796.

Any board member (See page 1).

Help Wanted! Servers Needed!

Calling all volunteers! We need help at the Spaghetti Supper. Do you have any spare time on the day of the supper?

We need help in these areas:

- Setting up tables and chairs in the morning.
- Cooking in the kitchen.
- Making lemonade & coffee.
- Serving food and drinks.
- Taking down tables and chairs afterwards.

If you could help in any one of these areas, we could reduce the workload on the handful of volunteers that help make this event a success.

To volunteer, call Tim Drendel (630-553-5411) or Wilbert Hageman (630-904-0796) or better yet, come to the WPMA meeting on the Third Wednesday in February or March.

No Farmers! No Food!

Thanks to everyone who regularly attends
WPMA board meetings.

On the third Wednesday of every month,
we celebrate our rich rural heritage!
You're welcome to join us every time.
Please call any board member for the
location of any upcoming meeting.

Important Dates to Remember!

February

February 1 - Int'l Festival, Merner Fieldhouse
February 14 - Valentine's Day
February 21 & 22 - Quilt Show, Naper Settlement

March

March 13 - St Patrick's Day Parade, Naperville
March 13 & 14 - Maple Sugar Days, Naper Settlement
March 21 - NMB Concert, Pfeiffer Hall at 3:00 - FREE

May

May 1 - Spaghetti Supper - See page 2 for Details!
May 2 - 4-H Open Horse Show at Harris Forest Preserve

For tractor show dates, call Tom Kuhn: 630-355-3454

THE GOODRICH FARM ON HOBSON ROAD

Prepared by Charles Howard Goodrich II
July 2003

In 1832, Naperville was a tiny settlement on the edge of the Illinois prairie. In the fall of that year, Henry and Thankful Goodrich arrived from Benson, Vermont, and bought land along the East Branch of the DuPage River (later known as the William Green farm). This land was on the south side of Hobson Road just below what is now Route 53. Four years later, he bought about 200 acres a couple miles west on the south side of Hobson Road. There his family and descendants lived until the land was sold to a developer in the 1960's. Henry was one of the sixteen founders of the First Congregational Church in Naperville - 1833. The red brick Hobson School and the Goodrich Woods Forest Preserve occupy the western boundary of the farm.

Of the four children of Henry, only Charles Henry continued living and farming on this site after his father died. Charles was born in Vermont and was nine years old when his family moved to this area. He returned east, attended Middlebury College, taught school for a term in Ohio, met his wife, Phoebe Jane, there, and then brought her to Naperville upon his father's sudden death in 1841. There they farmed until his death in 1914. He was also road commissioner of Lisle Township and built the first iron bridge across the DuPage on Hobson Road. They had five children; the last one, Irving, was born in 1862.

Irving attended the old Hobson School, located on the river by the first bridge, then went on to graduate from what is now North Central College. In 1905 he built a huge ten-room house adjacent to the original Goodrich home and brought his bride, Elizabeth McDowell, to live there. His first love was farming. He rented the farm out for a few years when he served on the Selective Service Board during WWI, then as president of the First National Bank of Naperville. In 1926, he deeded about 20 acres of the westernmost and wooded portion of the farm to the DuPage County Forest Preserve District. In 1928, the present Hobson School was erected.

He and Elizabeth had one son, Charles Howard, born 1907. In 1930 Charles Howard moved into the big home with his new bride, Rose, whom he had met while attending North Central College. Irving and Elizabeth moved into Naperville, and Irving began working full time in the real estate and insurance business. In 1944 Rose died, leaving two sons, Charles Howard II (better known as Howard) and John Irving (Jack). Irving then retired. He and his wife moved back to the farm and lived in the original Goodrich home until his death in 1949, followed by hers eight months later. In 1945, Charles married Beatrice Christofersen, and they had three sons (Donald, Steven, and William). Charles ran the farm until his untimely death in 1958. It was then leased to Tom Drendel until it was sold to a developer. The only landmark that remains is the Goodrich Woods Forest Preserve and the red brick Hobson School.

CREDITS:

A View of Historic Naperville by Genevieve Towsley, published by the Naperville Sun, November 1, 1975

"Goodrich family ties linked to local church," Naperville Sun, September 18, 1991

About Goodrich Woods, a pamphlet published by the Naperville Park District, no date

Reprints of two articles with Genevieve Towsley's byline, originally in Naperville Sun, no date

Do you have time to tell your farm history?

Are you writing your family history? Is it ready to be highlighted in the next issue of the Rural Heritage News?

The Wheatland Plowing Match Association welcomes your family history for publication in this newsletter. Please give me a call if your family history is complete and ready to share with other farm families.

Our volunteers strive to publish your written histories without typographical errors, omissions or changes. Sometimes, however, because of limited space, we must edit to fit.

Please attempt to keep your submitted histories at 1000 words or less. If farm family historians can provide a hard copy as well as a copy on a computer disk, it would be greatly appreciated by our editors who must keystroke the information.

We also welcome longer, more detailed histories, letters and updated memories to keep on file for the web site. John Bushman at Naperville North supervises the Wheatland Plowing Match Association web site.

Ruth Hageman
Chairman, Historical Committee
630-904-0796

WPMA Web Site

Visit the Wheatland Plowing Match Association web site, www.wheatlandplowing.org, to check out activities and events, farm history, the history of WPMA and other topics of interest. The site also has links to agricultural sites for your quick reference to other farming topics.

Scholarship Report

It is customary for the WPMA to award two \$1,000 scholarships each year to high school graduates who demonstrate an interest in agriculture business or a related field. In 2003, we awarded scholarships to four qualified applicants.



If you know of any high school seniors who are headed for college to study in an agriculture-related field, please tell them to apply for our scholarships. Applications are available in the guidance offices at all of the local high schools.

Advanced education is important no matter what career, and we are so happy that our fund-raising efforts provide so many scholarship opportunities.

If you have any questions, please call me at 630-357-1234.

Mary Ann Bobosky
Chairman, Scholarship Committee

Growing Up on the Goodrich Farm

What was it like growing up on a farm near Naperville, Illinois, in the 1930s and 40s? For starters, I remember the huge horses that did all the heavy work and burned lots of hay and some oats. I was too small to harness them and to be responsible for driving them around as they pulled the farm equipment. I did have for "chores" the job of keeping hay in their mangers and bringing them water. The most exciting time with horses was harvest time—when the oats all over the country were a golden "amber waves of grain" and many neighbors would converge on a single farm for threshing time. A huge monster of a machine would be brought in, powered by a monstrous old tractor with a pulley and a belt running to the thresher. All the neighbors with their teams of horses would gather the shocks from the field and haul them to the machine that would separate the grain from the straw. I recall one time that a horse's tail was caught in that belt, and it darned near took off that tail. My job was to walk out to the fields with lots of cold water and milk for the crews working so hard in the sun. At noon dinnertime, the horses would be unhitched and put into the shade with plenty of water. The farmers would leave their caps lying on the ground just outside our house. They would wash up, then sit at a huge extended table for a scrumptious meal prepared by the host farmer's wife with the help of neighbors' wives. How the men could go back out to work in the hot sun after that meal, I can't figure out; but they did. I guess I was a wiseguy brat, for sometimes I would take their caps and throw them into the horse water tank to cool them off.

At the end of this harvest season, all the farmers and their families would have what I now call the social event of the summer. They would meet with the man who owned and operated the threshing machine to settle their accounts. While the men determined how much time they spent at each farm and how much they owed the thresherman (and each other), the families had lots of fun. The

moms prepped food for everyone, and the kids had a great time fooling around. At the end, there was lots of ice cream and fresh pies.

I grew up during a most important time in the history of agriculture, as tractors were slowly but surely replacing horses. My father was one of the first farmers to get a gas burner. It was a bright red Farmall with steel wedge lugs for tires and two front tires close together to give the effect of a triangular wheeled vehicle, easier to make sharp turns in fields. The horses gradually disappeared. I shall always remember when I was four or five; my father put me on his lap and let me steer the Farmall for the first time. As soon as I could handle the clutch and brakes, I was operating that tractor all by myself. I think maximum speed was about four-mph. Soon all the equipment converted to tractor drawn. Sadly, the thresher days were gone, replaced by a combine that did all that harvesting right out in the field. Dan was the first in the neighborhood to own a combine. He would take it to near farms to do their crops also.

I wasn't too crazy about my job of hauling the grain from combine bin to the barn and emptying the wagon into the blower that took the oats up into the barn loft. It was always hot weather, and the chaff made by boy very itchy. However, this discomfort was nothing compared to the summer I worked on Junie Kuhn's hay baler. Remember pushing the baling wires through each bale while someone on the other side did the tying? This job was done with your faces right where the dust flew out as the big fist of the machine punched more hay into the bale. By then, I was late into my teenage years in the 40s.

Speaking of unpleasant memories, I must mention the most negative feeling chore of all. Like most farmers, my dad raised hogs for market. There was a time of year that all young males eventually going to market had to be castrated. On this morning, we would remove testicles from at least fifty to one hundred pigs weighing around 50 pounds apiece. My brother, Jack, and I would have to catch these pigs and bring them to my dad in an upended position. Then we had to hold these screaming beasts down (one of us at the front legs and the other at the back) while our dad did the operation with a super sharp knife, always knowing exactly where to cut. Then he would douse the screaming, outraged animals with turpentine right on the wound. We kids then returned the animals to a pen. Years later, I can still remember the sights and sounds, and I can still feel the anger and pain those animals must have felt. And to think there are many people who consider hogs' testicles as a special gastronomic delicacy!

Before I change the subject from "chores," there are some special memories of my teenage years in the 40s and 50s. I felt a bit lonely working out in the fields alone all day with the tractor and whatever equipment was towed behind it. It was also very exacting work that required quite a bit of attention. Preparing the fields with plows, disks, drags, etc., required quite a bit of skill when making U-turns at the ends of the field, especially when the field ended very near a fence of wires, trees, or other implements. In fact, it took skill to stay in a straight line driving down the length of a field. Cultivating corn with a machine that handled eight rows at a time demanded ut-

most concentration. Since I am quite a daydreamer, I really had to focus on this particular job else I would completely wipe out a stretch of eight rows of carefully planted corn. Yes, I must confess to that sin, but it didn't happen often. Pulling a six-foot sickle to cut down clover for hay was exciting, especially when turning a corner at the end of a field, discovering a huge stone right in your path, or perhaps a nest of pheasants. Unfortunately, the pheasants weren't usually found until after their protective environment was removed.

Speaking of animals, both Jack and I were very much involved in 4H Club. We both had hogs, Jack a pet steer, and I a Brown Swiss heifer. I do not remember how Jack did in the County Fairs, but I always got a blue ribbon for my heifer. Do you suppose it was because it was the only one of its class? We were responsible for feeding and caring for these animals, keeping detailed records of how many expenses went into caring for them. I can never forget our dad's admonition not to get too fond of farm pets, for probably they will eventually end up on your dinner table, if not someone else's. Another advantage of our living on a farm was we had a Shetland pony for a number of years which we cared for and rode bareback all over the neighborhood. He had the reputation for suddenly stopping to put his head down to eat some grass. We often flew over his neck. Also, he might swerve at almost a right angle at full gallop, leaving us going straight ahead. The funniest time was when our dad tried to ride him. He reared; leaving Dad stuck on an electrified barbed wire fence for a few seconds. It was the only time he rode the pony.

However much I envied the town kids who played with each other all day in games of baseball, football or swimming at the Centennial Pool, my experience as a farmer's kid was precious. I did learn to handle dangerous equipment very safely. I learned to anticipate potential hazards and to avoid accidents. Driving a car was very easy for me, as I was doing that at the tender age of nine – not in traffic, of course. When I reached the age of fifteen and had my permanent driver's license, I was an excellent defensive driver with all the required skills. The auto was a means to getting one place to another, not a toy, a symbol of power, not a weapon of destruction. I like to believe that farmer kids are better drivers than others are.

Socialization. Though there was considerable space between farms, we children managed to visit each other and to play together. During WWII, we played soldiers with toy weapons. Sometimes we got enough neighbors together to play football or softball. In the heat of summer, our father let Jack and me ride our bikes into town to swim in the afternoons after we had done our chores in the morning. It was three miles to town - one mile from our Hobson Road farm just east of Hobson School to Washington Street at the DuPage River, then two miles mostly downhill past Edward Sanitarium. Returning home was definitely a chore, as we were tired from morning work and afternoon swimming. However, we had to pass the Prince Castle on the way home. Of course, we nearly always stopped for a five-cent cone or a twenty-five cent malted milk shake.

We attended the one-room Hobson School, walked the quarter mile every day until we had bikes and good

weather. That school was another special experience, as we had 25 children and all eight grades. A fantastic teacher named Henrietta Ehrhart made sure we were ready for high school in Naperville. I remember it was mostly a Catholic neighborhood (not that religious difference meant a lot). But, I was so upset when my mother made us baloney sandwiches for lunch on Fridays when all the other kids had meatless Fridays. I felt different. When high school years came, there were no yellow school buses. We had to find our own way to school.

We were quite closely knit as a family. We had three meals together. Yes, all four of us every day. Always a prayer before each meal. We had genuine conversations at the table. In the evenings, we often sat in the living room reading quietly or perhaps playing games of pinochle, Chinese checkers, or the like. Of course, we grew up before TV. On Sunday afternoons, we sometimes took day trips in the car, and on some occasions, all bundled into the car for a vacation trip somewhere.

Every Sunday was the social event of the week for our parents. So we all dressed up and went to Sunday School for an hour, then to church for another hour, then another half hour waiting for our parents to finish greeting and talking with other parishioners. You might say that I was over churchd during these years! Except for milking the cows twice a day, we had no chores on Sundays, a day of rest, unless it was sunny and there was hay all dried and cured to be made. I do remember Sundays as special afternoons with lots of free time, even to play games with Dad or to visit with friends.

Even though I became a high school teacher in an urban community, and thus escaped the solitude and lonely feeling of spending too much time alone working in the fields (or the torture of castrating hogs), I wouldn't trade this experience for ANYTHING ELSE! When I look at the plow at the Naperville Riverwalk and think about what it symbolizes, I am filled with pride for having had the opportunity to be brought up on a farm.

Charles H. Goodrich Jr.
September 2003

Thanks for your help...in advance!



Consider lending a hand and donating prizes for the raffle at the Farmers' Pig Roast. Plan now to attend our annual reunion with family and friends.

Want to volunteer??? Please call Wilbert Hageman.

Farmers' Pig Roast

Check the next newsletter for the August Farmers' Pig Roast date and details.

REMEMBER: Proceeds benefit our scholarship fund and all other efforts to educate and create awareness about our rural heritage as stated in our mission.