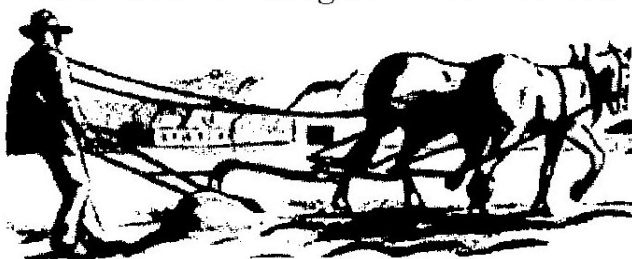


## Wheatland Plowing Match Association



FOR THE PRESERVATION OF OUR RURAL HERITAGE

Volume 14, No. 4

# Rural Heritage News

Fall, 2004

## WPMA Annual Meeting

**7:00 p.m. Thursday  
November 11, 2004  
John Greene Realtor  
1311 S Rte 59**

It is time for the WPMA annual meeting. At this meeting we need to nominate new officers. Several of the officers have stayed in their position the maximum time allowed for their terms. We need more people to participate on the board. Our older members are ready to turn over the reins. *If you are interested in helping to keep the WPMA going strong we need you NOW.*

This is the meeting to come to. Come hear what WPMA has accomplished this year. Give new ideas for the year 2005. Come and help us continue the tradition of the Wheatland Plowing Match Association. A handful of board members cannot do it alone.

Please mark your calendar for Thursday, November 11, at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in a large meeting room in the basement of the John Greene building at 1311 S Rte 59. Come in the entrance hall past the desks, turn right the elevator and the stairs will be on your right. Take one or the other to the lower level.

The John Greene building is located at the corner of Montgomery Road and Rte 59. Between the entrance to White Eagle and the Bank.

Tammy Brigel

## 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: 630-551-4779  
Correspondence, Louise Wiesbrook: 630-551-4779

### 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, Louise Wiesbrook: 630-551-4779  
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

## **WPMA Scholarships awarded**

*Once again four \$1000 scholarships were awarded during the Farmers' Pig Roast to individuals who plan to further their education in a agriculture minded career.*

*Inside this issue you will find two of the interesting essays from the students that were selected to receive the scholarships. The other two essays will be in the next newsletter.*

*Congratulations to Karalyn Bushman, Brian Lein, Emily Smith and Eric Wulf.*

## Plainfield Historical Society Cemetery Walk Sunday, Oct 10, 2004

Would like to invite everyone to a Cemetery walk at the Plainfield Township Cemetery. It is a living history event with costumed actors portraying some of Plainfield's early settlers. Come take a walk in the past.

The cemetery walk is at the Plainfield Township Cemetery on Rt 59 & Fort Beggs Dr. in Plainfield on Sunday October 10, 2004 from 1 – 5 p.m. (rain date Oct 17)

### Farmers' Pig Roast Update

WPMA would once again like to say Thank you to the sponsors and everyone that volunteered their time. We could not do it without your help.

We would also like to thank the people who took the time to bring their antique cars and tractors to share with all of us. Ken Wolf who was the one that brought his plow and demonstrated what the Plowing Match was originally all about. To see your cars and tractors bring out *stories and memories* that are priceless.

A special thank you to Wilbert Hageman for his leadership, dedication and guidance. The pig roast was a success because of the endless hours you and Ruth put into it.



### WPMA Web Site

Visit the Wheatland Plowing Match Assoc. web site, [www.wheatlandplowing.org](http://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.



### Do you have time to tell your farm history?

We are in desperate need of your family histories. 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's November meeting will be held on Nov. 11<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at John Greene Realty. We welcome anyone that would like to come help keep WPMA going strong, give us ideas.

### **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.

Meetings are held at John Greene Realtor building at 1311 S Rte 59 at 7:00 p.m.



## Did everyone see our wonderful float on Labor Day in the Last Fling Parade?

On our float representing the WPMA was Mr. Earl Meisinger, behind the walking plow that was turning sod, holding the reins to the miniature horse, Little Black. Yes, she was real I know it was hard to tell because she was so well behaved. (Even when some of those city folks were thinking she was a goat or a donkey. She still stood up proud with her harness on.) Also well behaved on the hay rack wearing their 4H shirts, displaying their hard earned ribbons and trophies were, Jessica & Becky Brigel, Heather, Bailey, Cordell Weisbrook with their dog Elena.

Our walkers handing out flyers were Karen Allen, Ron & Tammy Brigel, Tim Drendel, Anita Miller, Louise & Jessica Weisbrook and the tractor driver was Karl Weisbrook.

The Naperville Jaycee's recognized the WPMA float as the best designed in keeping with their theme of the award winning community.

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We hope that everyone enjoyed the Spaghetti supper and the Farmers' Pig Roast this year. Thank you everyone for helping make the WPMA fundraisers a success. We also appreciate our advertisers and please remember to let them know you saw their ad in the WPMA newsletter.

We lost two more of our wonderful WPMA members this summer.

Marjorie Meyers  
Pete Boecker

These two friends and members will be greatly missed. But we will remember them for their kindness and generosity.



## That was then, This is Now

Who would have thought on September 22, 1877- the first Wheatland Plowing Match- that we would still be drawing crowds of rural community-minded people to come together in celebration of our heritage of farming and country living in 2004? At the first plowing match, there was an attendance of 250 people. The committee wrote of the first plowing match, "We learned among other things that a furrow can be plowed straight; that there are men who are masters of the plow; that while we live, we progress; that sulky plowing is a great step in advance of all hand plowing."

The men and women of the 1800's could not even imagine the progress in farming that has been made. The Wheatland Plowing Match Association has definitely grown in members and attendance to both our Family Spaghetti Supper in the spring and Farmer's Pig Roast in the summer. These two annual events are fundraisers for the scholarships that we provide for young people who wish to pursue an education in agricultural studies.

Although today only demonstration plowing and antique machinery is present at the Farmers' Pig Roast, we still gather to meet again with old acquaintances. We also gather to witness this organization that has grown and survived the test of time, and that through volunteered time and talents will continue to grow so that one day, perhaps, our ancestors and community-minded people will look back and smile on the progress we have made.

Visit the site of the original Plowing Match on 119<sup>th</sup> St. (1/4 miles East of Route 59). The inscription on the 1976 monument reads, "Dedicated to all the people who tilled the land and furthered agriculture during the 100 years of progress." The goal of the Wheatland Plowing Match Assoc. is to continue to preserve our rural heritage. It is evident every day that agriculture in the Wheatland and surrounding areas is a thing of the past, but preserving this rural history is our duty to our forefathers and to our future.

Thoughts from Karen Dietzman

*Karalyn Bushman is a graduate of Naperville North High School. She plans to study elementary education. Congratulations Karalyn!*

## Bailey Hobson's Grist Mill

The fertile soils of the Naperville area were indeed a primary reason for so many of its ancestors as they came to the area to settle, raise their families, and farm its land. The primary crops of the early 1800's for the settlers were corn and oats, providing feed for the settler's livestock and food for the family. But the crops for the family were so often ground and made into flour by hand. The need for a larger scale "grinding" of the crops for personal use provided the impetus for a "grist mill." Without access to a "grist mill", the farmer had to pound and grind his corn by hand in a mortar and pepper mill. The result was an inadequate quality, also contributing to the need for a large-scale "grist mill".

The only mill that existed in the early 1800's between St. Louis and Detroit was the mill constructed and operated by Bailey Hobson on the Dupage River. This was so fortunate for the Settlers in the Naperville area.

Bailey Hobson (born April 30, 1798) and his wife Clarissa, and their five children, came to the Naperville area in the spring of 1831, building a log cabin on the Dupage River about one mile south of the Naperville settlement. Moving his family from Millington, a small community in Kendall County, Hobson toiled with his new Naperville neighbors to build a crude cabin during the winter of 1830-1831 to house his growing family. Soon after moving into their new cabin, the family started to clear land to plant their crops.

Sources indicate that Hobson started to construct two small mills, prior to the long-standing grist mill, which is the topic of this treatise. Israel Blodgett had the forethought to purchase in 1831 at Fort Dearborn and have it transported to the Naperville area the heavy machinery to use in the grinding of corn for the local Indian population.

The new grist mill of Hobson's, was operated by horse power and installed in a small log building on the Hawley property. This mill ground the local settler's corn into a coarse meal and sifted out the hulls. Hobson started construction of the new "grist

mill" in 1833, and so many of his fellow settlers contributed labor for its construction. Henry Boardman was one of the largest contributors of both labor and finances. Others who helped in the construction were Michael, Samuel and Hobson; Sam and F. Goodrich; and Mr. Alden, Clark, Giddings, McKee, Perkins, and Webster. Mr. Boardman, in addition to his labor, contributed a sum of \$1489.95 towards the mill's construction.

The financial accounting for the mill includes such costs as: "Paid at Buffalo for one set of millstones, \$190.00; paid John Kinsie for transportation and storage, \$46.00; Paid Bush for Bolting Cloth, \$50.88." On the succeeding page, the journal indicates "Paid Miss Standish for putting on bolting cloth, \$2.00." Most of the mill's incidental hardware, including nails, screws, etc, were obtained from "Newberg, Peck & Bush. The imported French Buhr stones were purchased and brought in from Buffalo, New York. The castings cost \$120. When completed the mill was about 3 1/2 stories high, gable ended, frame building standing just west of the Dupage River, on the west side of the mill-race.

The construction of the mill was completed prior to the harvest of 1834. The "raising" or completion party was the "social event" of the time, where settlers and their families came from miles around to celebrate the finished mill. This "raising" party cost Bailey Hobson a grand total of \$310.74, according to records in the mill account book.

For many years, Hobson's grist mill was the only mill in the northeastern part of Illinois. Settlers came for many miles with their horse-drawn wagons, loaded with grain, to have their grain ground into flour. Because of the volume of business, many settlers had to wait their turn for grinding, so they had to camp nearby. Hobson later build a tavern to accommodate the settlers while they waited. When the years provided a meager harvest and the flour supply was limited, Hobson refused to sell a man more than his fair share. As the area's population increased, the flour supply was taxed and Hobson was forced to ration the supply "wisely" so that no one would go hungry.

As the mill became successful, Hobson turned his energy toward the erection of a proper home for his family, which now included seven children. This

home also served as a source of hospitality for the settlers as they waited to have their corn ground. It has been said that no money was collected from the settlers, and that this hospitality was strictly an “accomodation.” The Hobson family lived in the basement, while the upper level rooms were opened to the settlers using the mill.

The mill was not personally operated by Bailey Hobson for the first few years of operation, but rather by various “tillers” who were paid on a share basis: 25% to the miller, 75% to Hobson. After this time, how the mill was operated is not known. After Hobson died in 1850, Mrs. Hobson briefly leased the property to various individuals, including Mr. C. Parker and Mr. Fyfe. In 1852-53, the mill property was subdivided and sold by a special commissioner to satisfy outstanding debts. The 32 acre site was designated as Lot 14 of the former Bailey Hobson estate and was sold to Calvin C. Barnes and John Kimball in March, 1853 for \$6275. The mill was extremely profitable over the next three to four years, but fell upon poorer time through 1889. In 1890, the defunct mill was sold for the bedrock quarry stone found at the site. In 1896, the mill building was moved to a farm three miles west owned by Andrew Wehrli, where it spent the remainder of its life as a barn.

In 1929, an agreement between Wehrli and the DuPage County Forest Preserve District allowed for preservation of the Grist Mill site. A memorial park was dedicated (Pioneer Park) and later became the sole property of the Forest Preserve District. The exact site of the Grist Mill is marked by a monument located about 90 feet northeast of Washington Street, opposite Clyde Street, about 400 feet south-east of the park’s parking lot. Two of the old buhr stones highlight the monument.

Yesterday’s settlers could not have envisioned in the early 1800’s the effect that this Grist Mill would have on their lives and livelihood; nor could they have envisioned the effect their agricultural roots would have on the Naperville community of today. The remains of the early Grist Mill still are with us in the form of a memory as seen by the Pioneer Park monument that still stands as a recognition and a reminder of the area’s first farmers and friends of these early settlers. They remain a positive force in the development of the Naperville community.



*Brian Lein is a graduate of Neuqua Valley High School. He plans to study Automotive service technology/Automotive Engineering. Congratulations Brian!*

With a mother that grew up on a farm and a father who started his job of field work at the age of 10, there was no question that when I came around, I would also be interested in agriculture. While the dream of me owning my own farm is one that will likely never happen, (due to the expenses and skills that I do not possess) there is no doubt that I will remain connected to agriculture for my entire life.

It all started way back when, about 18 years ago, I rode in my first tractor. Now obviously, being 18 right now, I don’t actually recall these first influences of agriculture in my life, but I am sure they affected me. These first instances of agriculture being in my life were because of my grandfather. He was born, raised, and lived nearly all of his life in Naperville Township. In fact, the house that my mother and grandfather grew up in was built by my great grandfather. My parents tell me stories of how I used to ride in the tractor all day buckled into a car seat, and would sometimes sleep longer and more soundly in the cab of the tractor than in my own bed, but I obviously don’t remember this. I can, however, recall a few years later, at the young age of 4 or 5, riding for hours upon hours with my grandfather, back and fourth across the fields harvesting corn and soybeans. I could never get enough of it, and usually went home crying because I wanted to stay longer.

One of my favorite memories of harvesting is that it was my responsibility to flip the switch to put the auger out on the combine. I could never wait for that moment to come, and most of the trips up and down the field were full of me asking “Grandpa (in a small and excited voice) is it full yet? Should I put out the auger now?” I also remember the goodie bags that we brought with us, and candies and other little treats that Grandma would pack for us, but not too much because it would “spoil our dinner”. More recently, as of when I was about 15 years old,

I was invited to go up to a family friends farm and learn how to do some field work of my own. At this age I was (and still nearly am) interested in anything with a motor and wheels, so needless to say I was very excited. One of my first jobs while on the farm was raking hay. While our friend and his kids don't really adore the job, I was in love with it. Driving an open cab 560 for two and a half days in the sun was a dream. I loved every minute of it, and actually got pretty good at making some nice, straight windrows by the end of the first day. The next time that I visited the farm, it was before the second cutting, and it was my time to step up to the big boy. I got to run a 7210 Magnum with an eighteen foot wide discbine behind me. This was a huge responsibility, because of the enormous cost of these machines, the complex procedures it takes to run them, and because if I didn't do my job right, there was no way to fix it. I had the time of my life running that tractor for 2 days, and surprised myself at how well I could run that huge machine. I took a few pictures, and when I got back home, just about everyone that I knew got to hear about how I drove this huge machine and cut just over 100 acres of hay in just under 2 days. I continue to go to the farm and help out as often as I can. Every trip that I take is a learning experience, and I always love the new knowledge and responsibility that I acquire on the farm.

Because of all these real life experiences, I have only grown to want to know more, and to learn more about mechanics and the way things work. Running the equipment and being involved in the farm has only helped that interest to grow. I someday hope to be able to work on anything and everything that comes to the shop, from lawnmowers to cars; from boats to farm equipment. These experiences are those which I will never forget, and will never be able to replicate anywhere else.



### What do you know that we should know?

*A listing of upcoming events appears in the newsletter. It needs your input. If you have news events, memorable poems or historical thoughts to share in this newsletter, please forward them to WPMA historian Ruth Hageman.*



## How rich are you?

One day a father and his rich family took his young son on a trip to the country with the firm purpose to show him how poor people can be. They spent a day and a night in the farm of a very poor family.

When they got back from their trip the father asked his son, "How was the trip?"

"Very good, Dad!"

"Did you see how poor people can be?" the father asked.

"Yeah!"

"And what did you learn?"

The son answered, "I saw that we have a dog at home, and they have four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of the garden, they have a creek that has no end. We have imported lamps in the garden, they have the stars. Our patio reaches to the front yard, they have a whole horizon."

When the little boy was finishing, his father was speechless. His son added, "Thanks Dad for showing me how poor we are!"

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**Now is the time to renew your WPMA membership dues. Before you get busy with the Holidays! We have enclosed a membership form for your convenience.**

### Important Dates to Remember!

#### October

October 10 - Plainfield Cemetery Walk

October 10 - Danada Fall Fest

October 16 & 23 & 30 - Naperville Farmers Market

October 24 & 31 - Halloween at The Lyon's Farm

#### November

November 11 - WPMA Annual Meeting

November 14 - Naperville Municipal Band Fall Concert

November 26 - 28 Naperville Hometown Holidays

#### December

December 5 - Christmas at The Lyon's Farm

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