

# Seymour History Bulletin

A publication of the Seymour Community Historical Society – Fall and Winter 2016  
Dedicated to Preserving Seymour Area History Bill Collar, Editor - **833-6064**

**Web site: [www.seymourhistory.org](http://www.seymourhistory.org)**

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**Summer hours: 1:00 – 4:00 WTFSS**

Fall and winter: **1:00 – 4:00 Sunday**

**Closed: January, February and March**

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## Thank You for Your Support

The Seymour Community Historical Society needs your help to preserve local history and to continue to offer activities for adults and children in the Seymour area. Every donation helps us meet our goal and is greatly appreciated. The purpose of our newsletter is to keep our members informed of exhibits, activities and progress at the museum and the vital role the historical society fills in the community. Our members are our most valuable asset. We cannot play a viable role without your support. Please use the form at the end of this publication to make a donation to the society this holiday season.

### Christmas Open House December 3rd

In this issue you will be updated on society activities during the summer and have a preview of things to come including our Kids' Christmas open house on December 3th. Generous donors enable the society to do unique things such as providing 75 complimentary presents, wrapped in Christmas paper, for Santa to distribute. All the water and soda for the summer music program is provided by thoughtful members. Sponsors make it possible to feature exhibits that promote greater appreciation for the arts, social, and cultural history. We truly are a "Community" society.



### Exciting Articles

In this issue you will find part two of history buff and society backer, Ralph Melchert's article about the importance and decline of the railroad in Seymour. Lynn Koenigs steps back in time with a visit to Al and Jean Timm's residence as they share memories and items from the past. Diane DuFour relates how her family and eventually the museum came to possess many original items from Hamburger Charlie's stand.

### Volunteers Make it Happen

Please note that even though you may have received previous newsletters via the Internet, this printed copy includes an envelope suitable for returning a donation to help the society meet our financial obligations. The philosophy of the Board of Directors is to have a vibrant organization with numerous activities and changing exhibits. All museum workers are volunteers and 100% of your gift is used at the local level. We appreciate your assistance. All donations should be sent to PO Box 237, Seymour, WI 54167.

## Highlights of the Annual Meeting



***Board member Jon Braun chats with Helen Keller (Jessica Michna) after her impressive performance.***

A capacity crowd gathered in the meeting room of the Seymour Community Museum to witness Jessica Michna's portrayal of Helen Keller. It was her third appearance in Seymour, previously appearing as Mary Todd Lincoln and Eleanor Roosevelt. Her dynamic program, about an hour in duration, received a standing ovation by the inspired audience.

Michna began her impression by quoting from a speech Keller gave to the International Lions Convention in 1925. After several minutes speaking as Keller and imitating her voice, she stepped out of character and described Keller's struggles from childhood until her death in 1968.

She emphasized the role Anne Sullivan played as Helen Keller's teacher and how they traveled the nation giving speeches and being advocates for those with special needs. In spite of being deaf and blind, Keller authored eleven books and was a co-founder of the American Civil Liberties Union.

Former museum board member Marge Coonen summed up Michna's program. "She was very informative and an absolutely wonderful speaker." Others commented on her ability to portray such a wide variety of historical personalities without using notes or any script.

In the business session of the annual meeting, Bill Collar, John Koenigs and Karen Kuske were elected to three year terms on the Seymour Historical Society Board of Directors. It was a fun afternoon for those in attendance. Members of the historical society served homemade pies, cookies, cakes and bars.

## High School Student Art Show

Ten high school seniors, under the direction of teacher Tina Harpold, displayed their creations at the museum during the last week of April and early May. The exhibition was attended by 115 people. The students were present for the grand opening and visitors enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the artists. It was a great opportunity for the students to share their works with the community. The display included different types of art including paintings, charcoal sketches, and ceramics. Senior students who had their work on display include: Victoria Majeski, Matt Eisch, Ian Hanseter, Cassie Piette, Abigail Coonen, Sadie Schinke, Michaela Thurow, Jaclyn Zahn, Jacob DeGroot, MiKayla Langteau, Anna Schenk, Roland Vandehei, III, Markus Hamm, Louisa Mehojah, Miranda Moeller, Julia Stadler, Amanda Shepard and Scott Kosbab.

Members of the historical society served snacks and refreshments. Plans are to make the senior art show at the museum an annual event. A special "Thank You" to board member Karen Coonen and high school art teacher Tina Harpold for coordinating the program. The school and historical society plan to make this an annual event.



*Jacob DeGroot and Abby Coonen with their art work at the Senior Student Art Show at the Museum.*

## **Working Warriors: Military Life Beyond Combat**



The exhibit **Working Warriors: Military Life Beyond Combat**, was featured at the Seymour Community Museum from May 14 to June 12. This display was made possible through a loan from the Wisconsin Veterans Museum and a financial grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council.

By viewing the display, the museum visitor learned more about Wisconsin military history, the sacrifices of the soldiers, and the contributions of a variety of support personnel. About 75% of military work is considered non-combat. These roles rarely make the headlines, but are vital to every military operation. Exploring the non-combat roles of military service personnel, including work as barbers, military police, dentists, mechanics, and photographers, the exhibit showcased an often overlooked but highly relatable side of military life. The exhibit was presented in a pop-up banner format.

The exhibit was enjoyed by over 200 people including many veterans. The local historical society has plans to host future traveling exhibits sponsored by the Veterans Museum and Wisconsin Humanities Council.

## **Golden Age of Video Arcade Games**

During the month of July, the second floor of the Seymour Community Museum was transformed into an arcade of vintage video games. The museum hosted Bradley and Jessica Czech's "The Golden Age of Video Arcade Games" collection which featured the iconic and rare arcade games of the late 1970s and early 1980s. With 29 games on display, and five available for



***Kids of all ages enjoyed the video arcade exhibit.***

free play, the exhibit was one of the most popular ever hosted by the museum. Over 750 people visited the museum to take a trip back in time and enjoy the nostalgic experience.

Bob Bock summed up the experience: "It was neat to see parents bringing their children into the museum to show them the games they played when they were kids. The exhibit drew many people from surrounding communities; it provided them with the opportunity to tour the rest of the museum and the old general store. It was a great way to publicize the impressive facility we have in Seymour."

The unique display drew the attention of two television channels and several radio stations that did remote broadcasts from the museum. A number of sponsors were responsible for bringing this exhibit to Seymour. A sincere "Thank You" to Don's Quality Market, Orion Labels, Inc., Sha-Bock Farm B & B, Seymour Lions Club, Seymour Firemen, and Gary and Mary Lou Melchert.

## **Burgerfest 2016**

Burgerfest was a huge success this year with over 1,440 visitors taking in the large burger display in the museum. The entire collection of over 1,500 burger related items was on display for the month of August. Numerous positive comments were made by people from throughout the Midwest who were visiting the museum for the first time

During the festival the museum is open from Noon until 5:00 PM. A crew of twelve volunteers help supervise the museum and old time general store. It is refreshing to hear many people praise the museum and its contents. Often out of town visitors return to the museum at a later date and bring friends.

## **Music in the Park Provides Great Entertainment**

The summer Music in the Park program concluded on Wednesday evening, August 31, with Chad Przybylski's Polka Rhythm's and a record setting audience of 456 people.. The crowd was treated to free hamburgers and fries by volunteers from the Home of the Hamburger, Inc. Steve Kemp, president of HOTH, and his crew prepared the treat. The color guard from Kraft-Krause Post 106 presented the colors.

It was another successful summer as over 3,000 people enjoyed the twelve concerts in the park. Members of the historical society appreciate the commitment of Seymour area merchants who make the music possible. It takes many volunteers to organize and produce the summer long program. A big pat on the back to members of the historical society who contributed their time, popping popcorn, filling coolers, selling concessions, distributing raffle tickets, organizing the programs, and preparing the site for the performances. Special appreciation is extended to host Mike Keyzers and John and Lynn Koenigs who lined up the music. Susan Manzke handled the free raffle while Diane Malcheski and Lynn Koenigs excelled at the 50-50. The following merchants helped

sponsor the music program and /or provided prizes for the free raffle. Be sure to thank them when you patronize their businesses.

- ✓ American Family Insurance
- ✓ Nicolet Bank
- ✓ Butters Wood Products
- ✓ Community First, Nichols
- ✓ Cornerstone Pizza
- ✓ Countryside Photographers
- ✓ Diedrick's Hardware
- ✓ Don's Quality Market
- ✓ Edward Jones
- ✓ Family Insurance Center
- ✓ Fox Community Credit Union
- ✓ Friends of the Library
- ✓ Garrow Oil and Propane
- ✓ Good Shepherd Services
- ✓ Home of the Hamburger
- ✓ Hotel Seymour/Jackson Point
- ✓ Huettl Bus, Inc.
- ✓ J J's Auto Clinic
- ✓ Krabbe's Kountry Klub
- ✓ Kwik Trip
- ✓ Lubinski, Reed and Klass SC
- ✓ McDonald's
- ✓ Menn Law Firm, Ltd
- ✓ New York Life, Ken Bakula
- ✓ Nichols/Isaar Snowmobile Clubs
- ✓ Performance Pallet Corp.
- ✓ Prevea Health
- ✓ Rooster's, Nichols
- ✓ Scott Marcks Construction
- ✓ Seymour DQ Grill and Chill
- ✓ Sha-Bock Farm B & B
- ✓ Subway
- ✓ Trackside Gas and Convenience
- ✓ Truman, Haase, Zahn Insurance
- ✓ United Agriculture
- ✓ Witt Family Ford



***Seymour natives Larry Wussow, Scott Skodinski and Andy Huettl are annual favorites at Music in the Park.***



***Diane Malcheski and Lynn Koenigs took off from selling raffle tickets to sing the National Anthem as Post 106 presented the Colors.***

## **September Art Show A Huge Success**

Over 100 guests attended the art exhibition of the works of Lila Zastrow and Dave Hendrickson. Keeping with the tradition of featuring local artists, the historical society was pleased to display the unique creations of the artists who reside south of Seymour on French Road. Demonstrating a wide range of skill, the couple presented 144 items in a number of mediums including wood, glass, and fabric.

Lila Zastrow graduated Magnum Cum Laude with a degree in music from Lawrence University in 1977. After graduation Lila worked with Ron Wall building tracker organs for a period of two years. She went on to apprentice in the field of piano technology with Mike Drost and eventually became a technician for Lawrence University Conservatory as well as having private customers in the Fox Valley. Throughout her life Lila has created art in various media and continues to explore new ideas. She has built two harpsichords and rebuilt more than 60 pianos.



*Lila Zastrow pictured, in a dress she made from men's ties, with her husband, Dave Hendrickson and a mannequin wearing a knit wool dress that Lila created.*

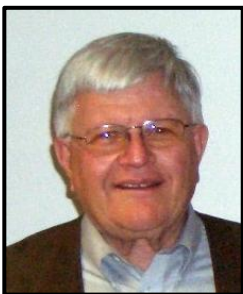
David Hendrickson graduated from UW-Madison with a degree in art in 1972. He went into the field of band instrument repair. After meeting Lila, he joined her in the piano tech business.. David has also continued to make art and is building classical guitars and lutes.



*Visitors to the exhibit marveled at the wood carvings, leaded glass and original fashions.*

## Seymour and the Railroad: A Brief Glimpse into the Past

By Lifetime Member Ralph J. Melchert



*A longtime railroad buff, Ralph's first article **Memories of Trains in the Seymour Area** was printed in the 2015 Fall/Winter **Seymour History Bulletin**.*

*The article is available on the Seymour Community Historical Society Website ([seymourhistory.org](http://seymourhistory.org)) under "News".*

A person born in a Midwestern town or city within the last forty-five or fifty years may have a difficult time imagining how dependent on the railroad most of these towns and cities were during the previous one hundred years or so. In fact, many of these towns and cities owe their existence to the railroad. Seymour

(Outagamie County, Wisconsin, population 3,436) is one of these cities.

Prior to the building of the Green Bay and Lake Pepin Railroad in 1871 from Green Bay to Winona, Minnesota, and the beginning of regular service on January 23, 1872, what is now the City of Seymour consisted of just a few homes. The nearest community with a post office was Lime Rock, located about one and one-half miles southwest from the center of present-day Seymour, near the present-day intersection of



French Road and State Highway 54. Located on a ridge, Lime Rock was bypassed by the railroad in order to take advantage of a more level route to the west. With the railroad now going through Seymour, as well as the post office being re-located to Seymour, Seymour grew, while Lime Rock gradually disappeared.

### **Horatio Seymour**



The Town of Seymour, formed in 1867, was named after Horatio Seymour, former governor of New York and unsuccessful presidential candidate against Ulysses S. Grant in the 1868 election.

Horatio Seymour was the largest landowner in the area, so it was logical to name the town after him. In 1879, seven years after rail service began, Seymour's population grew to 900 and was incorporated as a city. The population of Seymour continued to grow due to the timber industry, but as the timber declined the population did as well, dropping to about 700, and around the year 1900 Seymour had the distinction of being the smallest incorporated city in the United States.

### **Freight**

Timber was the big industry when the railroad began service in 1872. In 1871 Seymour had a stave factory and a shingle mill. By 1875 there were six mills in addition to two grist mills in Seymour. Two big products were staves for barrels and hubs and spokes for wheels. In addition, in 1875 C.M. Upham and Brothers of Angelica hauled nearly three million feet of pine lumber and eight million shingles to Seymour for shipment by rail. Also, supplies for these industries were brought in by rail, as well as the necessities needed by the general population, since the railroad was the basic

source of transportation, especially for large items and large amounts.

### **Cargill Inc.**

As the timber was harvested and the land cleared, farming increased. Because wheat was being grown, in 1879 Cargill built a grain elevator in Seymour, as well as in other towns and cities on the Green Bay and Lake Pepin Railroad. In 1893 Robert Kuehne moved to Seymour and established a large livestock, grain, and produce business. In 1902 a vegetable canning company, known for most of its life as the Seymour Canning Company, was established. These, as well as many other businesses, resulted in a large freight business for the railroad.

Virtually every business in Seymour was a customer of the Green Bay and Western Railroad



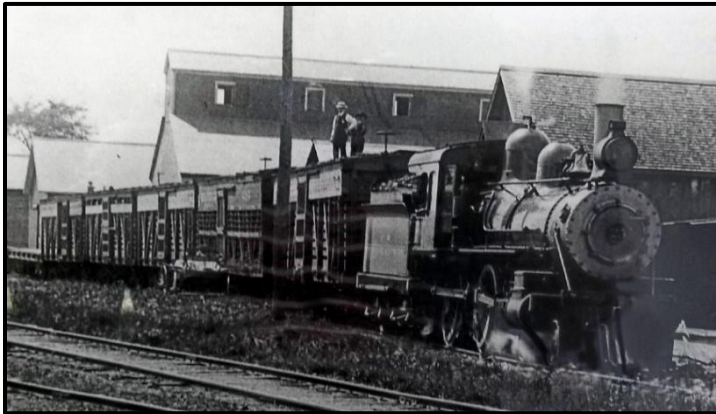
***Cargill Grain Elevator***

(a successor of the Green Bay and Lake Pepin RR). According to its 1943 *Official Directory of Industries*, the GB & W listed 44 businesses in Seymour as customers of the railroad. This may be surprising to someone living in the 21st century, as today we think of railroad shipments as large and bulky freight items, such as coal, grain, lumber, large containers, etc., and while that is true, in the days before trucks were as prevalent as they are today, many smaller items such as groceries, hardware, tools, eggs, cheese, and dry goods were among the smaller products handled by rail. The railroad handled

items such as UPS and FedEx handle today, only the railroad normally did not deliver door to door. The items were delivered to the railroad depot, where it could be picked up by the customer, or a local company, such as Jos. F. Huettl Transfer Line, would pick up and deliver the items to the local customer by truck, or in earlier days by a freight wagon pulled by horses.

### **Robert Kuehne & Co.**

Several Seymour customers stand out as shipping a large quantity of freight over the years. For example, according to the *Appleton Post*, January 23, 1896, Robert Kuehne & Co. shipped as many as 16 carloads of livestock per



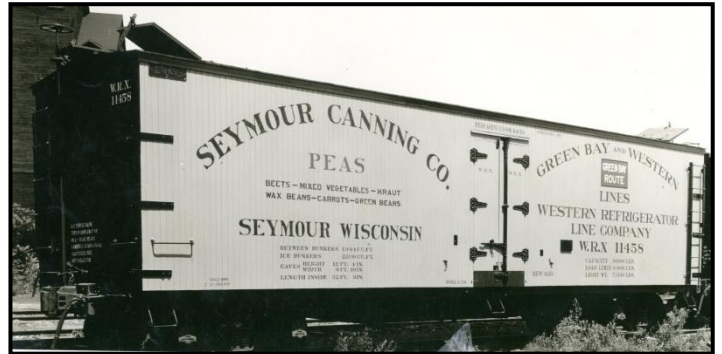
### ***Kuehne was one of the largest stock shippers in the state.***

day. (See photo). Seymour became one of the best livestock markets in the Midwest. In addition to livestock, Mr. Kuehne dealt in grain and produce. In 1914, he shipped 123,000 sacks of cabbage by rail. For many years Robert Kuehne averaged 400 carloads of freight per year. Reorganized in 1936 as R. Kuehne & Sons, in 1943 the company shipped 46,200 head of livestock from Seymour. In 1958 100 carloads of mesh-sacked sweet corn were shipped in addition to 600 carloads of mesh-sacked cabbage.

### **Seymour Canning Co.**

In 1925 the Seymour Canning Company was purchased by Henry J. Selmer and G. T. Farley. The plant was modernized, and

production increased from fifty thousand cases to around two hundred fifty thousand cases yearly. The railroad played a big part in the



company's business as all the seeds and cans came in by rail. It is estimated that between fifty and one hundred carloads of vegetables were shipped yearly. Gradually trucks took over for the railroad, and during the 1980s shipment by rail ceased. In 1999 the canning company was sold to Lakeside Foods. In 2014 production was transferred to other plants, and the Seymour plant was closed permanently. With the closing a big part of Seymour's history ended. The canning company was a big part of Seymour, as it provided summer jobs for many local people as well as income for farmers who grew the vegetables. Almost everyone in the area had a connection with the canning company at one time or another as a customer, employee, or grower.

### **Seymour Woodenware**

Another customer of the railroad over the years was the Seymour Woodenware, which





produced wooden cheese boxes. These boxes were used by cheese plants throughout the country, and many boxes were shipped as far away as Vermont by rail. As trucks replaced rail transportation, and as wooden cheese boxes were replaced by other forms of packaging, shipment by rail ceased.

Lumberyards such as Miller-Piehl received carloads of lumber and other building materials. Since coal was in high demand for both residential and industrial use, carloads of coal came in by rail. Tank cars of gasoline and other petroleum products were also significant in Seymour's railroad business. In years past automobiles were brought in by rail, but in later years trucks pulling auto carriers became the norm. Farm tractors and implements continued to be brought in by rail until more recently.

One can see that until recent decades the railroad was an essential part of community life, and the railroad was the lifeblood of the economy.

### **Passenger Service**

The Green Bay and Western was not especially known for its passenger service. There was a good-natured jibe in the past that "G B and W" stood for "Grab Baggage and Walk". This jibe probably had its origin in the fact the words humorously fit the letters "G", "B", and "W", rather than an intended criticism of the railroad's passenger service.



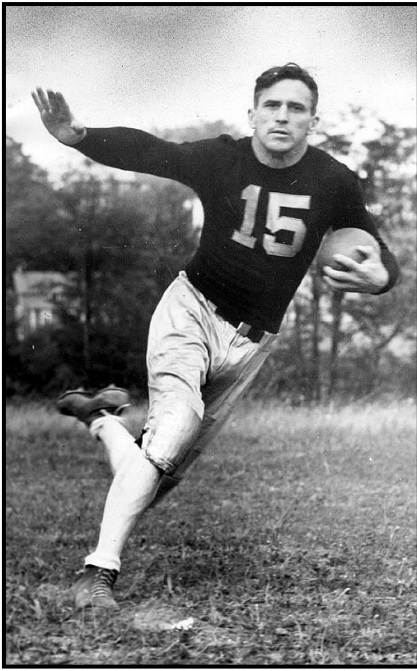
Passenger service was important to daily life in Seymour. Each day "the Scott", a train

originating in Wisconsin Rapids would head east to Green Bay stopping in Seymour at 10 am. This schedule enabled the people of Seymour to go to Green Bay for shopping or other business and return later that same day. On weekends many picnickers with their picnic baskets would get off the train at Pamperin Park, assisted by the courteous train crew. On the return trip the crew would assist the picnickers back on the train headed back to Seymour. Once a year a special excursion train made the trip to Lake Emily near Amherst in Portage County for an enjoyable day at this pretty little lake. In the early years of the Outagamie County Fair in Seymour an excursion train from Green Bay would arrive at 10 am. The passengers would be met at the depot by a band, and then the entire group would make the trek to the fairgrounds.

Passenger traffic for the railroad was at 50,000 yearly in the 1870s and peaked at 315,000 in 1915. Due to increased competition from the automobile, passenger traffic on the GB & W declined to only 1000 yearly in 1947. In these final years passenger service reverted to mixed passenger-freight trains, and the service ended permanently on April 4, 1949.

### **Johnny "Blood" McNally**

Although Johnny "Blood" McNally is a legendary member of the NFL Hall of Fame, often his off-field antics rivaled his on-field performances. He played six of his fourteen seasons with the Green Bay Packers (1929-33 and 1935-36). He loved trains, and many of his antics were associated with trains. Rather than pay the passenger fare from his home in New Richmond, WI, in the western part of the state, to Green Bay for the start of training camp, he would hop a freight and ride in the manner of a hobo to camp. He would "ride the blinds", which is an expression for the dangerous practice of riding between the cars to avoid



detection by the police or train crews. One misstep would result in falling under the wheels of the train. The exact route McNally took is not documented, but the most logical route according to

the railroad map of the period, would be to take the Chicago and Northwestern from New Richmond to Merrillian, WI, where he could hop on the Green Bay and Western and ride directly through Seymour to his destination in Green Bay. If one is permitted to speculate, some Seymour residents may have seen what they thought was a hobo "riding the blinds" through Seymour, when it may have been in reality, Johnny Blood. At any rate, riding the rails in this manner earned Johnny "Blood" McNally the nickname, "the Vagabond Halfback".

### **Grandma and the Buffalo Bill Wild West Show**

My grandmother, Anna (Minlschmidt) Melchert, was born on January 27, 1883, and passed away on January 19, 1989, several days before what would have been her 106th birthday. Some years before she passed away, I recall her telling me about her excitement as a young girl growing up in the Black Creek area,



looking forward to the appearance of William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody, Annie Oakley, and the Wild

West Show Mr. Cody was bringing to Green Bay. She told me that during the night before the family was to attend, she and her sister would wake up their parents every little while, asking, "Is it time to go yet?"

Grandma did not tell me the date of Buffalo Bill's performance, but according to a letter Mr. Cody wrote from Green Bay to a business associate in Wyoming, dated September 3, 1896, the performance occurred on that date, when my future grandmother would have been thirteen years old. In his letter Mr. Cody stated that the attendance for that show was the largest they had on the tour. The show was billed as "Buffalo Bill's Wild West and Congress of Rough Riders of the World", an impressive billing to be sure.

Of course, young Anna and the rest of



the Minlschmidt Family would have traveled from Black Creek through Seymour to Green Bay on the newly formed Green Bay and Western Railroad. (The GB & W was formed in May of 1896 from the bankrupt Green Bay, Winona, and St. Paul Railroad.) This newly formed railroad (and its successors) would continue to serve Seymour and the other communities on the route for over one hundred years.

The Buffalo Bill Wild West Show normally used fifty-nine railroad cars to transport the show. The show's records indicate that after Buffalo Bill's performance in Green Bay on September 3rd, the show was transported for its

September 4th performance in Stevens Point by the Green Bay and Western Railroad. Of course, this meant that the entire Buffalo Bill Wild West Show passed through Seymour on its way to Stevens Point.

### **Noteworthy Locomotives**

One of the most noteworthy locomotives in the history of the railroad was the Alco 2-8-2 (Mikado) locomotive. Six of these large locomotives, commonly referred to as "Mikes" for short, were purchased between 1937 and 1939, putting the GB & W on a par with the large first class railroads in terms of locomotive



***The Alco 2-8-2 (Mikado) locomotive***

power. These heavy new locomotives required heavier rails and upgraded bridges, but they enabled the GB & W to pull longer trains with more tonnage at higher speeds. They served the railroad well during World War II with the demands of heavier freight traffic. However, time marches on, and the age of steam was nearing the end.

The other most noteworthy locomotive, in this writer's opinion, was the Alco FA 1 diesel. Five of these locomotives were purchased between 1947 and 1949, truly placing the Green Bay and Western into the modern age of railroading. Many rail enthusiasts would argue that these FA diesels were the most handsome diesels ever built, but more importantly, they were efficient. What they did was silence steam forever on the GB & W. Although recently

overhauled, the six "Mikes" were retired, and by 1950 the GB & W was completely dieselized, making the railroad one of the first in the U.S. to rely completely on diesel power.



***The Alco FA 1 diesel***

### **The Closing of the Depot in Seymour**

The original depot was constructed in 1873, and the current depot was built in 1915, making it 101 years old at this writing. It was the center of railroad freight activity in Seymour



***Looking west with the depot in the foreground. From the top of the Cargill Grain Elevator - 1914***

for more than sixty years, and now houses the Seymour Model Railroad Club. Due to competition from other forms of transportation, new technology, and other factors, by the 1970s the Green Bay and Western decided to close depots, including the one in Seymour. However, since the depot agent, Carl Pintsch, was a valued employee, whose seniority date was October 3, 1929, the GB & W felt an obligation to Mr. Pintsch to keep the depot open until he retired.

Carl Pintsch's last day was Friday, June 27, 1975. When the last train went through, Carl was confused as he received another order from the dispatcher. When he finished taking it down he was speechless. Train order #18 read: "Please accept this train order as our acknowledgement and appreciation for the many years of diligent, cooperative, and faithful service you have rendered to the Green Bay and Western Railway Co. May you enjoy many years of health and happiness in your retirement. Our best wishes to you and your family on this occasion". Signed ( President H. Weldon McGee and all the officers of the GB & W).

After this date all railroad freight business in Seymour was handled through the Norwood yard office in Green Bay, and trucks from that office handled deliveries to Seymour businesses.

### The Final Years

As freight traffic on the railroad continued to decline, the railroad was sold to the Intel



**Today the Seymour Depot houses a large model railroad exhibit and is open to the public.**

Corporation in 1978. The last straw, so to speak, was the cessation of rail car ferry service across Lake Michigan to Kewaunee in 1990, and the railroad was sold in 1993 to the Wisconsin Central Railroad to form a new subsidiary railroad, the Fox Valley and Western. By 1999 rail traffic through Seymour had decreased to the point where service was discontinued. The last train through Seymour was reportedly in

July of 1999. One hundred and twenty-seven years of railroad service to Seymour had ended, and in 2001 the Wisconsin Central was purchased by the Canadian National Railroad.

As with many, if not most towns and cities, Seymour was shaped and influenced by the railroad. How could it be any different with the railroad being the lifeblood of existence for well over one hundred years? Hopefully, this brief glimpse into the past will bring back memories for some, and for everyone a greater appreciation for the impact the railroad had on the development and growth of Seymour and similar communities.

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# Great Fun on a Hot Afternoon

By Lynn E. Koenigs, Lifetime Member and Active SCHS Participant

Did you ever have a day that didn't turn out the way you expected? My husband John and I were delivering thank you notes to our sponsors for Music in the Park. One was to Al and Jean Timm. We were invited in and after a pleasant visit we were taken to their "Museum" where various memorabilia from relatives has been collected.



What a surprise! Neatly preserved were some interesting artifacts. **Did you know they have a clock that has never left Osborn Township?** It seems that the oak chime clock was purchased in 1902 for Grandpa Simpson who lived next to his son near Five Corners. He was supposed to come to their house for meals but was always late. So, his son went to town and purchased two clocks, one for each household. (We don't know if that plan worked.) After the death of Grandpa Simpson the clock was stored in an attic.

David Timm purchased it at an estate sale in 1972. It was cleaned and with a few minor repairs the clock was once again running. The original price tag on the timepiece was \$3.50 and it still has the wind-up key.

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Standing in one corner of the room was a wheelchair similar to one that Franklin Roosevelt used. A sturdy chair was simply fastened to wheels. **Did you know that early**

**wheelchairs had three wheels?** It was impossible for the patient to be mobile by himself. Someone had to push it and they couldn't go very far because of the clumsiness of the contraption. The third small wheel is hidden in back of this chair.



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**I was surprised to learn that ice skaters from bygone days may have owned what is called a skater's lantern.** Today a special date night is a dinner and a movie, but in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries skating was the ideal date night. Can't you just picture boys and girls, men and women, bundled up in thick clothing, knit caps and scarves moving gracefully over the ice in circular patterns? Usually a bonfire was lit on shore for warming and lighting.



Early skates were tied or strapped to shoes or boots. Skating was extremely popular and people skated anywhere and everywhere they saw frozen, cleared ice...fishponds, rivers, lakes, and flooded fields.

Some skaters owned lanterns with white, red, green, or teal colored-glass globes. How beautiful that must have been! The glow emanating from the lanterns as they moved across the ice surely must have set a romantic mood. The light weight lanterns had a burner with a wick. The globe and bottom burner dismantled for easy cleaning. If you own one you might be surprised at its value especially if the globe is green or teal colored. As seen in the picture, the skater's lantern is much smaller than a regular one.

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**NEWS FLASH!**

If you have ever wondered what happened to the barber pole from Nichols, wonder no more! Al Timm found it in his father-in-law's garage stored in the rafters. Realizing the sentimental value, he brought it home and it is safely protected in the "Timm Museum".



**FOR YOUR INFORMATION:** "Smitty the Barber" lived in the back of his shop located on Main Street in Nichols (1940s). In later years, the shop was run by Mr. Mert Baker who only came on certain days to cut hair. After that, the building

was sold and the pole and chair were left behind. (The chair has also been saved, but that is another story.)

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**SAGE WISDOM FROM 1935: (Taken from a Case Tractor brochure)** "No one would ever have crossed the ocean if he could have gotten off the ship in the storm." --- Kettering

"The world has too many snow-shovelers looking for work in the summer and too many lawn-trimmers looking for work in the winter."

\*\*\*\*\*

**How did Irvin Timm entertain his two boys, David (8) and Bob (4), when they were quarantined with scarlet fever in the 1940s?**

Being creative and mechanically inclined, Irvin decided to build a homemade thresher for his boys. The belts from a sewing machine moved the gears, peach crates were used for the general construction, all mounted on a small coaster wagon. An old paint can became the hopper, and a garden duster replicated the blower. That pretty much completed the project.



When he carried it upstairs to surprise his boys, his son David said, "I need a tractor now!"

Irvin headed to the basement once again thinking

about a tractor design. He built the tractor using wood and tricycle parts. The steering wheel was an old water faucet and cast iron drawer pull knobs were painted to represent the radiator and fuel cap. The fevered boys loved lying on the cool floor playing with their new toys.

The tractor, with the belt, was hooked up to the thresher and the gears actually turned. The boys could drop grass clippings into the feeder hopper and the blower blew them out in piles. Imagine the fun those boys had!

When boys grow up the fate of toys is sometimes a sad one. These toys were stored in the farm granary for years until being restored by Al Timm. Al then gave them



to his father, David, as a Christmas present. These once favored toys had found the little boy who played with them so many years before. Oh, how he loved that gift! A month later, at Al's birthday, his father, David, returned the gift to Al knowing he would take good care of them, and keep them safe.

Each piece of equipment was at least three feet long.

\*\*\*\*\*

### **HALLOWEEN FUN**

In the evening, Irvin Timm and his two sons often saw the same car parked in the Moravian Cemetery near Freedom. Guessing what was probably happening, Irvin decided to have a little Halloween fun. He cut out eyes in three old sheets and then hid behind a gravestone with his two sons. Sure enough, the car returned. After waiting for a time...until things got interesting inside the car...they jumped out making ghoulish sounds.

The frightened driver started up the car and made a fast get-away busting down the gates of the cemetery. On Sunday, the pastor wondered how the cemetery gates got ruined. He asked if anyone had information regarding the incident? Upon hearing this, Irvin Timm

began to laugh so hard and loud that he fell into the church aisle. His boys? Well, they were scared stiff thinking they were in trouble.

**Does anyone have any information regarding the driver of the mysterious car?**

**P.S. The car never returned to the cemetery again.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### **THE TIRE CAPER**

During World War II procuring rubber tires was very difficult because they were rationed. Knowing that, David, and probably his brother, decided to play a trick on unsuspecting drivers passing by their road. **What did they do?** The boys would lay a tire out near the road's edge which was attached to a fishing line. The innocent driver would see the rubber tire and turn around or back up to get it, even though it was worn and patched. You guessed it...by the time the driver could claim his "treasure" the boys had reeled it safely in.

\*\*\*\*\*

And that my friends, is the fun one can have with Al and Jean Timm on a hot afternoon while delivering thank you notes.

*Lynn's books are available in the museum gift shop.*

## **Hamburger Charlie's Items on Display in the Museum**

By Diane DuFour



***Visitors to the museum may wonder how the historical society came to possess Hamburger Charlie's original spatula, butter pot, and bell. Recently Diane DuFour***

***submitted an article explaining how her family obtained the items and then donated them to the museum.***

When my family moved to Seymour in 1944 one of the most exciting attractions was the Outagamie County Fair. When we went to the fair my father, Theodore DuFour, told us to visit Hamburger Charlie's stand. He told us Charlie was from Appleton and we should help keep him in business. Little did we know that Charlie's stand would one day be ours.

*Hamburger Charlie sold burgers at the fair in Seymour for 66 years from 1885 to 1951.*

My dad taught in Seymour and also sold insurance. One day in 1953 when calling on clients he met Hamburger Charlie's family. They were selling Charlie's stand and everything he used to make and sell his burgers. My dad was interested and came home to talk it over with my mother, Leone.

The next morning my mom told my sister, two brothers and me to clear out a space in the garage because daddy was bringing something home. We were expecting a desk and some insurance paperwork. We had a big surprise when he came home with Hamburger Charlie's stand!

Daddy told us he planned to travel to county fairs in the area similar to what Hamburger Charlie did. These included the Brown, Shawano, Waupaca and of course, Outagamie County Fairs. That year, and for the next three or four years, my dad, mom, and my brother, Terry, traveled to the area fairs. I stayed home with my younger brother and sisters and didn't get to work on the stand.



***Charlie's spatula, butter pot and lucky horseshoe are on display along with his guitar and bell that he would ring when burgers were available.***

They would come home and tell us about the interesting people they met and the good times they had.

When they stopped traveling to fairs we used many of the things from Hamburger Charlie's stand in our home. Eventually we donated several of the items to the Seymour Museum.

***Visitors to the museum can listen to Hamburger Charlie's Chant, ring his bell, and see a number of his original utensils courtesy of the DuFour family.***

## Fourth Graders Tour the Museum

This fall six classes of fourth graders from Rock Ledge School took guided tours of the Seymour Community Museum. After a brief orientation emphasizing the changes that have taken place during the last 100 years on Depot Street, the classes were divided into two groups of 10 to 12 for the tour.



The students learned what life was like prior to electricity and many modern conveniences. They viewed a program about the early years and through a video met Horatio Seymour, the namesake of the city. When viewing the military exhibit, the students learned how residents of Seymour and the surrounding area responded to defend our freedom from the Civil War years to present times. The



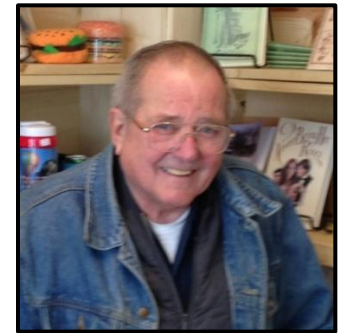
Home of the Hamburger exhibit introduced the students to Hamburger Charlie and explained how the burger originated in Seymour in 1885.

As a class project, Mr. Lowney had his students send "Thank You" cards to the museum staff who provided the guided tour. Their comments can be summed up by the phrase written on the top of the card "We loved our tour of the museum." Many students remarked that they would have their parents bring them back.

Mike and Sue Keyzers, who helped as tour guides, were impressed with the behavior and interest of the youngsters. "The students were curious and asked many questions. It was a fun experience to show them around the museum. Their teachers had them well-prepared."

## Nagel Park Bench Project Complete

People attending the Wednesday night music programs in Nagel Park this year noticed many new benches. Often people bring their own lawn



chairs but others rely on the seating available. A number of the benches were showing their age and were becoming unstable. After several unsuccessful attempts to secure them, a great friend of the museum, Ron Nachtwey, came up with a plan. Ron designed a prototype sturdy six-foot bench that he said he could build at no cost to the historical society other than the cost of materials.



***Ron Nachtwey at work in his shop with his helper, granddaughter Autumn.***

Since the program started two years ago, 23 people decided to sponsor a bench and donate \$150.00 to the museum sustainability fund. With the materials costing about \$50.00, Ron's donated workmanship amounted to a significant gain for the historical society and museum. Listed below are the names of the people listed on the plaques attached to the benches. In many cases the names are preceded with the phrase "In memory of".

Leland (Butch) and Betty Blohm  
Bill and Holly Collar  
John Cumicek Family  
Seymour Dairy Queen  
Tom and Ann Duffey  
Rita Gosse, Frieda Feurig &  
Robert E. Gosse  
Bernie and Mary Huettl

Gary Kropp  
Mel Kuske "The Pop Man"  
Warren and Gloria Maass  
Jack and June Marsh  
Joel "Buck" Marsh  
Jim McMaster  
Walter and Ruth Melchert  
Jeff and Edna Mueller

Gerhard and Marjorie Nachtwey  
Russel Naze  
Roy and Joan Porter  
Bert and June Raether  
Northeastern Roofing, Inc.  
Tom's Tunes Singers  
Rose Marie Skinkis  
John and Dorothy Van Boxtel

## Shop at the Museum Store



***Susan Manzke's books are available in the gift shop.***

Are you looking for an unusual Christmas gift or a postcard representative of the city of Seymour? The museum gift shop offers a wide variety of objects from which to choose. How about a Hamburger Charlie bobblehead, hamburger jewelry, T-shirt, cap, drinking mug, or a book written by a local author? The store has books authored by Susan Manzke, Lynn Koenigs, Sharon Nachtwey, Donna Van Straten Remmert and several other area writers. The postcard

selection ranges from contemporary cards with a burger theme to historical cards depicting life in Seymour during the early 1900s.

## The Memory Forest

Christmas is only six weeks away and the Seymour Community Historical Society is accepting sponsors to purchase trees in the memory forest that will brighten up Depot Street again this year. Anyone who desires to purchase a tree should contact Janice Eick at Northeastern Roofing (833-6184). The trees are a minimum of \$35.00 and will be in place by Thanksgiving. Please decorate your tree as you wish. If you only want lights on the tree, that is fine. This is a great way to remember a loved one while donating to the historical society.



Forty trees are available this year. They will be sold on a first come, first served basis. Once again, name plaques in front of the trees will identify the sponsors. The trees are lighted the entire month of December. Sponsors are responsible for decorating and removing decorations from the trees. Please

have all decorations in place by December 1<sup>st</sup> and remove them after the holiday season

## Christmas Fun at the Museum

Everyone is invited to the ***"Kids' Christmas at the Museum"*** on Saturday, December 3<sup>th</sup>. The theme for the 10:00 to 2:00 program is "The First Christmas." The program will feature a life size Nativity.

Children will have the opportunity to win prizes and receive presents. Crafts, vintage toys, treats, and surprise gifts (as long as they last), will be available for the children. The first 75 children will receive a free present to unwrap from Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus. The museum will be decorated to reflect the holiday spirit. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

This is a great opportunity for parents and grandparents to spend some quality time with their children. The entire museum will be decorated and Christmas music will be playing. All the trees on Depot Street will be trimmed to portray a variety of themes and commemorate loved ones.

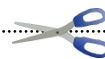
# Donations and Memberships from March 2016 to November 2016

## (In the order received)

The historical society gratefully acknowledges the following donations and new memberships.

Orion Labels, LLC	Seymour, WI		Exhibit Sponsor
Laurene Ferge	Nichols, WI		Membership
Donna Zahn	Appleton, WI		Sustainability
Marilyn Abel	Seymour, WI		Membership
Pudge and Ollie Lerum	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Barb Blahnik	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Thrivent Financial	Employee Giving Campaign		Sustainability
Giz and Linda Herbst	Egg Harbor, WI	In memory of Kaye Paulson	Sustainability
Pete Mullen	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Kwik Trip, Inc.	Seymour, WI		Exhibit Sponsor
Joan Wichman	Seymour WI	In memory of Thomas J. Wichman	Sustainability
John Banker	Black Creek, WI		Sustainability
Judith A. Bush	Downers Grove, IL		Flowers
Clayton and Audrey Ebert	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Dawn H. Luedke Ins. Agency	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Rock Ledge Intermediate	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Nichols Paper Products Co.	Nichols, WI		Sustainability
Butch and Betty Blohm	Seymour, WI	In memory of grandson Shaun	Sustainability
Bill and Holly Collar	Seymour, WI	In memory of Otto Krueger	Sustainability
Jean Heidt	Sturgeon Bay, WI		Life Membership
Richard and Bonnie Buntrock	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Gary and Mary Lou Melchert	Seymour, WI		Exhibit Sponsor
Bob Bock Sha-Bock B & B	Pulaski, WI		Exhibit Sponsor
Seymour Lions Club	Seymour, WI		Exhibit Sponsor
Don's Market	Seymour, WI		Exhibit Sponsor
Thrivent Financial	Employee Giving Campaign (Karen Coonen)		Sustainability
Doloris Kuehne	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Gary and Mary Lou Melchert	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Keith Krull	Navarino, WI		Sustainability
Todd and Joan Borremans	Seymour, WI		Sustainability
Bill and Holly Collar	Seymour, WI	In memory of Robert Ciesielczyk	Sustainability
Gary and Mary Lou Melchert	Seymour, WI	In memory of Robert Ciesielczyk	Sustainability
Janice Eick	Seymour, WI	In memory of Robert Ciesielczyk	Sustainability
Steve and Darla Dorosz	Seymour, WI		Sustainability

## Help Sustain the Historical Society and Museum with a Donation



Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_ (Circle Amt.) \$10.00 \$20.00 \$30.00 \$40.00 Other \_\_\_\_\_

In memory of (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Mail your donation to P.O. Box 237 Seymour, WI 54165. The Seymour Community Historical Society, Inc. is a tax-exempt entity. Your donation is fully deductible as provided by law. The federal identification number is: 39-1235870.

Seymour Community Historical Society  
P. O. Box 237  
Seymour, WI 54165

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**Return Service Requested**

## **Open House and Christmas Party at the Museum Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> 10:00 to 2:00**

**Website:** [www.seymourhistory.org](http://www.seymourhistory.org)

**E-mail:** [seymourhistory@centurylink.com](mailto:seymourhistory@centurylink.com)

**Museum Phone:** (920) 833-9835

If the museum is closed: (920) 833-6064

### **Museum Hours**

Summer:

1:00 to 4:00

Wednesday through Sunday

Fall and Winter:

1:00 to 4:00 Sunday

Closed January through March

Open by request anytime

Admission:

Suggested donation - \$2.00 Individual

- \$5.00 Family

Life Membership - \$50.00

Year Individual - \$5.00 Year Family - \$10.00

### **Your Historical Society Programs During the Past Year**

April - High School Senior Art Show

May - Annual Meeting Featuring Helen Keller

May - Working Warriors Military Exhibit

May - Memorial Day Slide Show

June - Historical 4-H Display

July - The Golden Age of Video Games

Summer - Music in the Park

August - Home of the Hamburger Exhibit

September - Hendrickson and Zastrow Art Show

September - Fourth Grade Tour

October - Haunted Store for Halloween

November - Veterans Day Slide Show

December - Kids' Christmas and Open House

