



Hinckley Historical Society News

2023, volume 3

Annual Meeting Was Upbeat



The annual meeting of HHS was held during the society's first band concert of the season on June 13 at the Community Building. The threat of rain forced the concert to be held inside but it didn't dampen a large audience's enthusiasm for the music or response to the success and achievements of the society during the past year.

Bella's Second Shot Band from the Aurora area had the audience's toes tapping and even some dancing during their performance with a wide variety of music. The nine-piece band included two vocalists and left the crowd wanting more.

The concert series is made possible in part by grants from the Farny R. Wurlitzer Foundation and Illinois Humanities. The goal is to keep alive the community's enjoyment of music in the summer and encouragement of youth to play musical instruments.

The annual HHS meeting during the band's intermission included the presentation of the group's service award, election of four board members, and reports from the treasurer and president.

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"She Was The Driving Force"

Cathy Dienst Bartels was presented the society's 2022 service award during the annual meeting for her efforts and driving force behind the museum expansion and creation of new exhibits.

In presenting the award, HHS Secretary Jeff Wielert said Cathy did an amazing job coordinating helpers, contractors, electricians, and volunteers to make the museum a real showpiece. "She paid close attention to detail, facts, and aesthetics as she worked on the displays" he said, and almost lived at the museum during the process.

Wielert said he has known Cathy and her parents since high school and was not surprised at her hard work or interest in preservation of the area's history. "She comes from a family that was well known around Squaw Grove and Pierce Townships," he said. "They came from places like Germany, Norway, and Prussia for a better life, planted their seed, grew deep roots, and helped make the community what it is today. Our honored recipient is much the same."

The Service Award was created in 2018 to honor those with the spirit and contributions of Delores Bastian and Kenneth Bushnell who realized the value of local history, founded the society in 2007 and helped it to flourish. The HHS Board selects the recipients based on their extra-ordinary service and efforts to help achieve the mission of the society.





Pat is shown giving her report while board secretary Jeff Wielert takes notes

Past board treasurer Pat Bastian gave a brief financial report to members that presented a positive balance and major expenses. Most of the cost of the new exhibits will be reflected in the 2023 annual report. See the financial report presented on page 5. A financial audit was conducted that gave a glowing review and complimented Pat's work.

President Bob Pritchard began his report saying it was a busy and exciting year for the society. He extended appreciation to the board for their creative work, to the over 146 society members for their support of our mission, and to the community for donations and their interest.

"HHS is financially strong, aggressively pursuing our mission and providing historic programming for all ages of the community," he said. While the museum was closed for nearly a year, it was expanded by removing part of the wall separating the museum from the adjoining former Hinckley Review newspaper office. The bathrooms, lighting and

electrical were updated. The interior was painted and the wood floors were refinished.

All the while, the board was involved in the community and organizing historic programming. He listed HHS activities:

- Sponsored 3 bands to provide summer concerts on the Community Building lawn
- Participated at the ice cream social, barn tour and homecoming parade
- Organized a big read and showed the movie Secret Soldiers
- Invited a panel to discuss former business locations
- Told stories about former residents at the Greenwood Cemetery walk
- Reviewed agricultural history with high school students

Since December, the board envisioned and created 20 new exhibits, held a museum grand opening in March, planned for four band concerts this summer, scheduled a second cemetery walk and made plans to show a movie filmed in Hinckley. It also ordered a long overdue head stone for Fanny Patterson, the Hinckley resident who was the first black graduate in 1915 of what is now Northern Illinois University. A dedication is planned for this summer.

Pritchard mentioned the value of starting an Endowment Fund and outlined the possible uses for the fund. He also urged the community to share short stories about their memories of life in our community as part of a state-wide historic project. These topics are explained in more detail elsewhere in the newsletter.

He concluded by saying "I hope you see value in being a member of HHS and joining in preserving the past for the benefit of future generations. We welcome you to bring your friends to the museum, volunteer your time with us, and share your family artifacts and stories. Hinckley, and the Townships of Squaw Grove and Pierce have interesting histories."

Board Members:

President - Bob Pritchard

Vice Pres. – Cathy Bartels

Secretary – Jeff Wielert

Treasurer – Jennifer Klambauer

At Large Members –Shawn McCrea, Rebecca Nickels, Stephanie Shelton, Ardith Trumpy, and Jay Yaggie

Newsletter published by Bob and Mary Pritchard

Excited to Serve



Four members were elected to the board of directors at the Annual Meeting on June 13 which brings the board to nine directors. Current directors Cathy Bartels and Ardith Trumpy were re-elected while Stephanie Shelton and Jay Yaggie will be new on the board.

Cathy Dienst Bartels (left) has served on the board since 2020 and is currently Vice President. She is a native of Hinckley but left for college after graduating from HBR and didn't move back until 2019. Her 38-year career in retailing took her all over the country from the west coast to the east coast. When she retired, Cathy and her husband Frank returned to the family farm at the south end of Sycamore Street. She was one of the artists who created the Hinckley Mosaic Mural and lead efforts this past year to expand the

museum and create new exhibits.

Ardith Nash Trumpy, is a 4th generation Hinckley resident, high school classmate with Cathy, and also joined the board in 2020. She developed her artistic talents in college and returned to her roots in Hinckley where her family had been active in a number of businesses for well over 100 years. Ardith was involved in the town's 2003 comprehensive plan which called for an art attraction to draw visitors to Hinckley. She was one of the leaders of the Mosaic Mural project and instrumental in the creation of the museum's 20 Decades of Hinckley displays.

Stephanie Shelton moved to Hinckley from Morrison in 2021 with her husband Brandon, and two children—one in college and one in high school. She works as an educator for the Downers Grove Museum where she utilizes her college training in history, political science and as a paralegal. Stephanie also draws on her experience as a resource teacher for the Morrison Community School District.



Stephanie has been helping the Hinckley museum accession its artifacts. She also is pursuing a masters degree in museum studies from the University of Oklahoma, applying for membership in the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), and researching her family history. "Hinckley is a welcoming community and I love high school sports," she adds. Perhaps you will hear her cheering loudly at games.



Jay Yaggie attended Hinckley schools since third grade and now is graphic designer, vinyl applicator, and self-proclaimed CEO of Strypes Plus More. The company his father started is today one of the oldest operating companies in Hinckley. Jay rekindled his interest in Hinckley history while producing most of the signage for our museum exhibits. "It was cool seeing how the community has changed over the last 30 years," he adds. Jay has fond memories as a kid riding his bike, skate boarding, and walking around town. "My wife Kelli is a history lover too and has traced her family back to the 1400s."

Jay feels getting involved in the community is a good way to make an impact and set an example for their seven-year-old son Austen. "I'm excited to join the board to help share the history of Hinckley and how wonderful a place it is to raise a family."

Royals Win Little Ten Track and Field Contest

Two Royals Compete at State Meet



The HBR Outdoor Track and Field teams proved that hard work, passion and leadership can not only win meets but also win conference championships. Since returning to the sports schedule a few years ago, the HBR track program has grown to 28 members this year with the boys team winning the Little 10 Championship and the girls team taking 3rd. Coach Amber Moore said the team had a lot of first-time participants who really pushed themselves. They encouraged each other and improved through the season. “We are aiming to do even better next year!”

Freshman Alex Casanas (left) and Senior Jake Juneau (right) finished a great season by qualifying for the state meet at Eastern Illinois University in May. While Alex did not place in the high jump at state, Jake finished 21st out of 35 competitors in the 400 Meter race. During the season Jake set a new school record for the



400 Meter race with a time of 51.99 seconds and bested the record set by another Jake (Austin) set in 2006. At the Sectional meet, Juneau did even better with a time of 51.67 seconds.



Juneau will be headed to North Central College in Naperville this fall to major in sports communications and continue to participate in track. He has been running the 200 and 400 meter races since sixth grade and also participated in basketball and soccer over the years. Juneau says “I love the competitiveness of running where anything is possible if you don’t doubt yourself.” Their stories are part of our history.

Endowment Provides New Directions

The Hinckley Historical Society Endowment was created to remember individuals who have been an important part of the Hinckley area and to provide funding for new historic endeavors. It's not a unique concept but one that excites the board of directors who created the fund last year. Here are some of the ideas that the endowment could fund.

Dorothy Phillips researched and published the History of Hinckley from 1834 to 1975. It's a wonderful document but soon to be 50 years old and greatly out-of-date. Considerable effort would be needed to research and organize the history of our area since then and present it in a sequel. If funding was available, someone with the talent could be hired to update our history.

Museum visitors today expect fresh exhibits and much more than a display of artifacts. They want to know the stories behind them, perhaps see video clips, and quickly learn the significance and context. Considerable expense and effort was put into the 20 Decades exhibits but plans need to begin to replace them. This is a continuing, time-consuming responsibility that the board of directors can't provide with current funding.

And then there is the desire to capture short stories of the memories of people. With our changing culture, future generations will want to know about our time and how people lived. An editor will need to review the short stories provided by residents and then edit videos for showing in our theatre.

The HHS Endowment is managed by the DeKalb County Community Foundation (DCCF) that will make annual distributions from the interest earned for special HHS projects. Donations to the Hinckley Historical Society Endowment are tax deductible.



Donations have already been received in memory of several couples. A permanent plaque is being created to recognize those donations and people being honored. It's a great way to share the significance they have played in our community. These are the recognition levels:

- Homesteader \$10,000 or more
- Builder \$1,000-\$9,999
- Explorer \$500-\$999

To discuss an Endowment donation, contact the HinckleyHistoricalSociety@gmail.com
or call Bob at 815-761-4058.

Hinckley Historical Society 2022 Financial Report

Beginning Balance 1/1/2022	\$65,170.75		
Receipts:		Expenses:	
Memberships	\$2,265.00	Office Expense	\$852.69
Donations	\$17,154.26	Utilities	\$2,813.97
Endowment Donations	\$40,500.00	Insurance	\$1,680.00
Grants	\$10,000.00	Merchandise Purchases	\$29.10
Museum Merchandise Sales	\$232.00	Museum Expansion	\$32,445.55
Programs	\$348.00	Museum Displays	\$1,811.31
Bank Interest	<u>\$22.64</u>	Programs	\$6,111.26
Total Receipts in 2022:	\$70,521.90	Endowment transfer to DCCF	<u>\$40,500.00</u>
		Total Expenses in 2022:	\$86,243.88
		Ending Balance 12/31/2022	49,448.77

Legacy Farms

We continue our series about farms in Squaw Grove and Pierce Townships that have been in the same family for over 100 years. The Illinois Department of Agriculture is the source of the designation and recognizes them as Centennial farms.

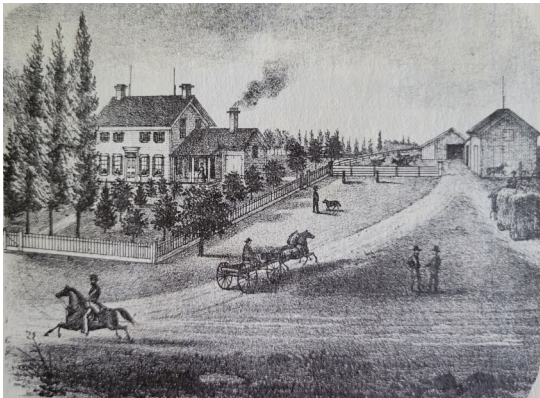
William Wielert Starts The Family Story

As recalled by Jeff Wielert

We all have dreams and desires. William Wielert and his brother Ferdinand dreamed of coming to the United States from their family's home in Germany and starting a new life. They arrived at Ellis Island in August 1867 and began the trek to Illinois. Ferdinand settled in Watseka while William settled on a farm in Section six of Squaw Grove Township west of what is now Hinckley.

He settled on the farm next to Christian and Frederika Hartmann who also had emigrated from the same area of Germany as the brothers but a decade earlier. William enjoyed the company of the Hartmann family and especially Sarah, the middle child of nine siblings. William and Sarah were married in 1872 and began their family that included five boys and three girls. William passed on his love of agriculture and animals to his sons. William J. Wielert would eventually take over operating his father's farm, as would his son, Clarence.

Meanwhile William bought the Charles Hubbard farm for another son, Charles C. "Charlie" to farm in 1908. Charlie planned to marry Emma Myrtle Averill and they needed a place to live. This land in Section 27 of Pierce Township had been purchased by Hubbard from the government in 1849. The Hubbards built a house and barn on the property that was pictured below in the 1871 Plat Book.



The barn that was on the farm for many years was built around 1857 by the Hubbards. Charlie told his son, Burton, the story that the wood for the barn was brought to the farm from the Adirondacks. The special pine wood was shipped along the Erie Canal and then to Chicago via the Great Lakes. It was then hauled by rail to Aurora and then carried by wagons to the farm. The original house burnt sometime after the barn was built and was rebuilt on the same foundation.

Charlie was especially talented at raising hogs and horses. He and Myrtle purchased the farm from his dad around 1911. With the help of their two children, Elnora and Burton, the Wielerts produced quality agricultural products and Burton grew to love horses like his father. Charlie was also involved in a threshing ring with his father-in-law, George Averill. George owned an Aultman Taylor steam engine and a separator (threshing machine) for separating the grain from the straw. They would take the machines to other farmers in the threshing ring to share the labor of harvesting and their equipment.

Farming is a hazardous occupation and Charlie had a severe fall in the corn crib at the farm. He went to the Mayo Clinic for treatment where the doctors identified he had cancer which eventually took his life in 1940. Myrtle kept the farm going with the help of Burton until the late 1940s when she sold the farm to Burton and his wife Ruth Leifheit. Myrtle moved to DeKalb in the early 1950s.

Burton was creative and liked to tinker with equipment. He saw how the kernels of corn used for seed were different sizes depending upon where they were located on the ear. He and another farmer invented a machine to sort seed corn by size so farmers could plant the seed more easily. They sold the idea to the DeKalb Agricultural Association for \$500 each, which was a sizable royalty in the depression era.



Berton with a prize-winning Percheron

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(WEILERT, continued from page 6)

While Burton was a teenager, working with his dad, he also helped at the sale barn in Maple Park working as a ring man bringing in the horses and other livestock that were being sold. He learned a lot about animal husbandry and got to meet area farmers which would pay off for him later in life when he and his son, Allan, opened a small farm machinery business on the farm property. They mainly handled several short-line implements such as New Idea, Barn-O-Matic, and Ritchie. Farmers from all over the area came to the farm for parts, repairs and equipment. Around 1971, Burton and his sons Allan and Darrell built a new shop to expand their repair business. Burton did welding, blacksmithing and general farm machinery repair.

Burton also built several new sheds and buildings on the farm which remain today. He converted one of the livestock buildings into living quarters for the hired help needed to run the farm. At the pinnacle of his operation, Burton milked dairy cows, raised beef cattle, chickens and of course, horses. He farmed about 525 acres with Farmall and Case Tractors. Over the years, Allen, Darrell and their families had some sort of opportunity to be involved with the business---whether it be sweeping the floor, organizing parts, sorting nuts and bolts or helping with field work. It was a family business.



The Wielert Farm on McGirr Road

Darrell inherited his father's love for horses and over time raised and showed beautiful Percheron horses, winning many ribbons and trophies. Darrell pursued the mechanic's field, trucking, and later working as a parts technician and troubleshooter for AGCO. He currently lives in one of the houses on the farm with his wife, Pat Clark Wielert, her son and grandson.

Allen went into the construction business in the 1960s building many homes in the Hinckley area, armed with lessons he learned from his dad. Later Allen and his wife, Bette Richards Wielert, opened Wielert's Hilltop Garden Center on one corner of the farm property which later became Ozzie's Greenhouse.

The next generation of Wielerts, Allan and Bette's son Jeff and his wife Kim Vincent Wielert opened Bountiful Blessings Farm Produce in 2011. Jeff pursued the dream of his ancestors in his love for agriculture and horticulture providing the area with fresh produce, fruit, salads, salsa, donuts, and--during the Covid pandemic---complete meals. Again, the whole Wielert clan helped.

In 2022, after Allen's death, Bountiful Blessings closed but not the Wielert involvement in agriculture. Allen's grandson, Andy VanLanduyt, is employed in selling OXBO agricultural equipment. Darrell's daughter Haley Wagner continued the family's interest in machinery and is employed at AGCO.



Don't Miss our next Band Concert—July 11



The Fox Valley Brass Band will perform the next concert in our band series on the Community Building Lawn starting at 6:30 p.m. on July 11. Bring your lawn chair, picnic basket and enjoy hearing show tunes, cinematic favorites and patriotic melodies! This free concert is made possible by a

grant from the Farny R Wurlitzer Foundation to promote music education.



145 East Lincoln Ave., P.O. Box 486, Hinckley, IL 60520

HinckleyHistoricalSociety@gmail.com

Facebook: Hinckley Historical Society

Website: Hinckleyhistoricalsociety.com

Phone: 815-761-4058

Events:

- * Museum is open every Saturdays from 10 to Noon and other times by appointment
- * July 11 Fox Valley Brass Band, 6:30 p.m. on the Community Building lawn
- * August 8 Shade Tree Music Band, 6:30 p.m. on the Community Building lawn
- * September 24 Cemetery Walk
- * Follow us on Facebook for comments, pictures and events.

Share Your Memories

Everyone has a favorite memory or story about the past. Sometimes you may include them in a letter or email, or share them at family gatherings. HHS doesn't want these memories to get lost over time and is participating in a state-wide effort to preserve them. Share your memories about school, family gatherings, what you did for recreation or jobs while growing up.

For starters, share your memories about lunch at school. How long was the lunch period? What did you eat? Did you trade items with other kids? What type of lunch box did you have?

For example: "I went to grade school in the 1950s" before hot lunches were prepared by school staff. Mom prepared something different each day that I carried in my POPEYE lunch box. It might have a baloney sandwich, or peanut butter and jelly. There was always some vegetable or fruit. In cold weather there might be soup in the thermos. It was real special if there was a Twinkie for desert. I didn't trade items with other kids, but lunch period was long enough we could actually eat and visit."

Don't worry about your writing style. The project is intended to draw attention to the varied experiences of residents in an era of cultural change and to increase our understanding of how our community developed.

Send your memories to HHS, P.O. Box 486, Hinckley, IL 60520 or Hinckleyhistoricalsociety@gmail.com. Thank you for participating in our project and sending memories of several different topics.

