



McFarland Historical Society

5814 MAIN STREET, MCFARLAND, WISCONSIN 53558
PH: 608-838-3992 Issue No. 59 February 15, 2019
Edited by Dale Marsden



Jerry Apps is the Guest Speaker at Our Annual Meeting at the Municipal Center Sunday March 3, 1 - 3:30 P.M.



We are pleased to announce that author and radio and television personality Jerry Apps will be our guest speaker at the McFarland Historical Society Annual Meeting on March 3rd. It will be held at the McFarland Municipal Building (5915 Milwaukee St., McFarland) from 1:00 to 3:30 pm. Jerry Apps, born and raised on a Wisconsin farm near Wild Rose, is Professor Emeritus at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the author of more than 35 books, many of them on rural history and country life. Jerry loves learning and sharing life lessons with others. Through his award-winning books, appearances and beloved programs on public television, he has gained popularity and a following throughout the country. Jerry will talk about one of his latest books, “Simple Things” – which are objects such as an old kerosene lantern from his family farm that brings back a flood of memories. Similar such “simple things” objects will be brought to the annual meeting. Members and guests are encouraged to bring along their own memories of simple things from their childhoods.

Our Society’s Volunteer of the Year is a secret this year. Nearly all of you know this person well and will highly approve of this selection by the board of directors. Come and find out who will receive this award and see a short video highlighting this person’s extensive volunteer work. Another group will also receive recognition – the many volunteers who participate in and make possible our “Very Victorian Christmas” at the Larson House Museum. Most of the photos are by Sue Vick Finley so you know it will be an outstanding PowerPoint slide show.

The public is invited to attend our lively annual meeting on March 3rd that includes Wisconsin wines and homemade refreshments.

Busy Days of Third Grade Tours

by Wes Licht



Wes Licht tells a third-grade class all about the musical history of McFarland displayed in the front window of the museum.

On October 2, 3 and 4, nine classes of new third graders from Waubesa School visited our museum during the beginning of their 2018 school year. The mornings were busy from 8:30 am until noon as three classes spent an hour looking at the historic displays each day. These children had to use their listening skills and imagination while going back in time way before even their parents and many grandparents were born. Teacher Andrew Garvey did a wonderful job of coordinating this museum visit with board member Wes Licht.

Wes organized the scheduling of guides who had to be on their toes during each full morning as they highlighted various parts of each display for the children. To make things easier and efficient, the teachers had predetermined small groups for looking at the exhibits and students wore large readable nametags. Another positive effort appreciated by our guides was that interested parents and grandparents assisted the teachers by accompanying the groups. Guides this year included Wes, Dale Marsden, Mary Freund, Gini Nichols, Jane Licht, Carol Beck, Don Peterson and Rod Clark. They reported that the classes seemed well prepared, well behaved, interested and curious and no one got lost. Once again the favorite museum experience noted in the thank-you messages from the third graders was exploring in the log cabin.

History Students Visit Museum

By Cindy Clark

McFarland High School 9th grade American History students connected their studies with the lives of local World War I soldiers and families as they toured the museum's "Wisconsin in the Great War" exhibits on November 6th and 7th, 2018. Board members Wes Licht, Rod Clark, and Cindy Clark talked with students about the 51 McFarland soldiers who fought in the Great War and pointed out artifacts related to that service, including clothing, helmets, a mess kit, backpack, pay books, and personal items. Cindy Clark introduced the Gold Star Mothers' exhibit which focuses on Mary Nelson and Mary Edwards, McFarland mothers who made government-sponsored trips to their sons' graves in France.



Rod and Cindy Clark talk about the Great War as McFarland high school students watch and listen.



The high school students listened intently as Cindy Clark spoke about the Gold Star Mothers display.

Very Victorian Christmas at the Larson House Museum

by Jane Licht

By all accounts, this year we had the most successful Very Victorian Christmas ever. Thanks to the many volunteers who made this possible. Near the end of November, a crew of strong gentlemen moved Christmas trees from the basement and the attic at the Larson House. They also moved many tubs of decorations to the proper rooms on the first and second floors. Our tree and tub movers were Wes Licht, Dale Marsden, Rod Clark, Bob Kolek, Russ St. Clair, Tim Mitchell, Don Peterson, and Ken Brost. Then Kathy Krusiec's team of creative women went to work on November 29 and 30. They decorated each room, mostly with themed Christmas trees.

The Larson House Museum is always part of Christmas in the Village, held this year on December 1st. According to our guest book, 137 people braved the ugly, rainy weather to enjoy the festivities. These guests listened to piano music by musicians John and Ava Thompson, Terry Peterson, Jo Thomley and DeeAnn Larson. They heard Christmas carols sung by friends from the United Church of Christ. They saw Norb Krusiec entertain a room full of children with his reading of "T'was the Night Before Christmas." They appreciated the house tours and the lovely Christmas decorations in every room. And, they ate yummy homemade cookies donated by many volunteers.

Kathy Krusiec, Judy St. Clair, Vicki Holten and Sherry Blanchar gathered materials and prepared gift baskets and fancy mugs at their own time and expense



Many families came to see the Christmas decorations at the Larson House.

and sold most of them. Quite a few McFarland Historical Society books were sold, and over \$300 in donations was generously given by visitors. Thelma Allen took cuttings from the ancient Christmas cactus in the Larson House, planted them in pots and these were sold during the month of December.

In addition to being open for Christmas in the Village, the house was open every Sunday afternoon in December for the general public. On other days of the month, a number of private groups reserved the house for their special events. These included three book clubs, a Red Hat Ladies' club, the McFarland Chamber of Commerce, a homemaker's club, a women's sorority, the Elizabeth Circle from McFarland Lutheran Church, and a neighborhood group from the Town of Dunn. Thanks to the volunteers who hosted and gave tours during the month of December: Judy St. Clair, Cathie Richards, Carol Beck, Kathy Krusiec, Thelma Allen, Jane Licht, Cheryl Ackley, Lee Ackley, Carol Torgeson, Paula Niedenthal, Markus Brauer, Martha Hollis, and Pam Gerstl. The total number of guests visiting the Larson House in December was 301.

Many visitors filled out the survey form to vote for their favorite room in the house and also to lavish praise on the decorations and the house in general. What rooms were most popular in the lovely Larson House? The McFarland State Bank dining room received the most votes and the Larson Family living room was second. The Nelson-Helmke-Lokken (octagonal) bedroom was third and the Olson family master bedroom just one vote behind. Of course, most of the children preferred the Nelson children's bedroom.



Photographer Sue Vick Finley took time to play her flute with John Thompson on the piano.

Looking for Special Display Items

by Wes Licht

We are reworking some displays as we make full use of the addition to our museum that houses the double-pointed rowboat exhibit. We are looking for some items for a long-term loan or by donation. For our toy exhibit, we are in need of a very old child's wagon and a pair of clamp-on roller skates. We are still hoping to find a very old Evinrude outboard motor. Additionally we are looking for very old parts of early automobiles – horns, lights, steering wheels, etc. If you have old photos of early cars or children playing with a wagon or other special toys or on skates, we'd love to have copies of them for our records and exhibits. Please contact Wes Licht at 838-8178 if you can help us improve our collections and exhibits.

WWI Gold Star Mother's Pilgrimage Project

by Cindy Clark

A mini-grant from the Wisconsin Historical Society and Wisconsin Council for Local History allowed us to digitize rare and fragile artifacts comprising the WWI Gold Star Mother's Collection and to make them available to everyone on the Recollection Wisconsin website (search for McFarland Historical Society at <https://recollectionwisconsin.org>).

Artifacts in the collection were donated to the society by the families of Mrs. Ole (Mary Lyster) Nelson and Mrs. Theo Edwards, McFarland-World War I Gold Star Mothers, who made pilgrimages to their sons' graves in Europe in 1930. Mrs. Nelson's travel diary, scrapbook, passport, identity card, photographs, son Helmer's letters home, and other ephemera are viewable on the site. A newspaper clipping about Mrs. Edward's trip and a photograph of Alvin Edwards, her son, are also part of the digitized collection.



Armistice Centennial Commemoration

by Wes Licht

On Sunday, November 11, our society sponsored a special open house to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the signing of the armistice ending World War I and to honor the service and sacrifice of McFarland's veterans. "Wisconsin in the Great War" and "A Gold Star Mother's Pilgrimage" were featured exhibits. Visitors were also able to see all areas of the museum, including the log cabin and the early farm display in the annex.

A special presentation conducted by Cindy Clark was held at 2 PM in remembrance of those local soldiers who served their country in 1917 and 1918. About ten family members of different WWI veterans were among the 90 museum guests and each of them shared a small bit of history about their relative's service. Cindy read a specially prepared Proclamation for Veteran's Day and veterans Dale Marsden, Rod Clark and Wes Licht from the society's board of directors took turns reading the names of all 53 McFarland soldiers. This list included Alvin Edwards and Helmer Nelson, who died in service and were buried in France. Bob Kolek and Joe Larson then rang a 21-Bells of Peace salute using the Alsmo family farm bell. After everyone recited the Pledge of Allegiance to a special United States flag, Michael Shumway and Russ Reppen, members of the Edwards-Foye American Legion Post 534, folded this flag which was then presented to our society president Dale Marsden by Post Commander Bill Bley. We thank them for this commemorative gift.



American Legion Post 534 members Russ Reppen and Michael Shumway fold the US flag which was then presented to Dale Marsden, center, for the McFarland Historical Society.

Proclamation for Veteran's Day 2018

WHEREAS, the tolling of bells is a traditional expression of honor and remembrance; and

WHEREAS, a century ago, 122,000 Wisconsin sons and daughters served our nation and the world in this global conflict known as WWI; and

WHEREAS, many men and women from the village and farmland known as McFarland and the Town of Dunn served selflessly and honorably in military and support roles for their country; and

WHEREAS, there were nearly 4000 Wisconsin soldiers killed in action, including two young men from McFarland, Alvin Edwards and Helmer Nelson; and

WHEREAS, on the 11th hour, of the 11th day, of the 11th month in 1918, an armistice to the fighting was declared; and

WHEREAS, the McFarland Historical Society is dedicating this event to remember those 53 McFarland soldiers in WWI;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, THAT THOSE OF US IN ATTENDANCE DO HONOR THE SACRIFICE AND SERVICE OF ALL MCFARLAND VETERANS on this 100th anniversary of the Armistice with the ringing of the Alsmo family farm bell.

Signed this 11th day of November, 2018.



DALE MARSDEN

PRESIDENT OF THE MCFARLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

McFarland's World War I Soldiers

Sam J. Aaroen

Albert Anderson

Clifton M. Brown

Emmett F. Cartwright

Kay V. Christensen

Ole Cleven

Edgar B. Colladay

Knudt S. Daley

Elmer Donaldson

Alvin Leroy Edwards

Oswald M. Elvehjem

Andrew Halverson

John J. Hansen

Adolph Harrison

Odean Harrison

William Harrison

Amil I. Havey

Severt Havey

Robert Allison Henry

Herbert F. Holscher

Elmer B. Hoveland

Elmer James Johnson

Axell Larson

Joseph B. Larson

Leslie E. Larson

Martin E. Larson

Ove Martin Larson

Helmer A. Lewis

Theo. G. Lewis

Donald G. MacLachlan

Fergus C. MacLachlan

Nelvin J. Monson

Hans C. Nedlose

Helmer Nelson

Tester M. Olson

Nils Ortun

Elmer A. Ottum

Ray Elwood Pride

Ephraim B. Reierson

Andrew S. Roneid

Rodney O. Siggelkow

Martin O. Skare

Raymond O. Skare

Robert O. Skare

Erling A. Smedal

John E. Soine

Paxton Colladay Stoddart

Albert J. Thompson

John T. Thompson

Karl R. Togstad

Anund H. Vick

Homer L. Vick

Floyd V. Vinje

165 year-old Skare Cabin Restoration

by Rod Clark

Again in 2018, maintenance and improvement activities for the historic 165-year-old Skare Cabin were a major work priority for the MHS Board.

In the spring, our neighboring property owner removed a large maple tree that had previously shaded the north side of the cabin. Opening up this area not only decreased the problem of debris and mold on the roof and cabin, but the improved visibility also provided the opportunity for some landscape improvements. In July, the Board voted to install a cedar rail fence along the north property line to delineate the boundary and blend in with the landscaping installed by our neighbor.

On July 17, a work group of Wes Licht, Dale Marsden, Don Peterson, Rod Clark and Dick Kohl gathered to unload materials, begin digging the post holes and install the fence. After the first post was in the ground, the crew encountered the remaining roots from the old maple tree which made digging very difficult. Fortunately, Dick Kohl showed his great expertise with a post hole digger and over the course of two work sessions was able to battle the roots and dig the holes, while other members of the crew installed the poles and the rails for the fence. The fence looks very natural in the setting and has helped improve the visual setting for the cabin.



Early in 2018, the Alsmo family donated an old bell, which had been mounted in a tree at the Alsmo farm and was used to call family members to meals. The Board decided to install the bell on a pole at the front of the cabin. While the crew was working on the fence installation, several members also took time to dig a hole for a 4x4 on which the bell was successfully mounted. The Alsmo farm bell was used during the November celebration of the 100th anniversary of the end of WW1, as bells throughout the country were rung 21 times at exactly 11:00 am on November 11, to honor those who died in that war.

Following up on work started last fall, a crew of Dale Marsden, Wes Licht, Rod Clark, Joe Larson, Bob Kolek and Don Peterson met on October 23 and 25 to apply mortar

daubing to the areas between the logs on the south and west sides of the cabin. In 2018, all the old cracked mortar had been removed from these areas, the logs were allowed to dry and then repaired. After some trial and error learning about how to mix the materials and the best techniques for applying it, the crew made good progress and finished the work with only two work sessions. The cabin is now well weatherproofed on those sides and we hope the new daubing will last a number of years. Additional work on the north and east sides may be undertaken next year, as needed.



Dale Marsden and Rod fill cracks as Joe Larson and Bob Kolek look on. Joe and Bob prepared the wire and mortar.



Wes Licht, Dale Marsden, Rod Clark and Joe Larson pose in front of the completed wall of the cabin.



Bob Kolek and Rod Clark work on the logs.

Obituaries

Jacob, Jeanne Henrietta, 88

MCFARLAND—Jeanne Henrietta Jacob passed peacefully the early morning of Oct. 26, 2018. Jeanne was born Jan. 30, 1930, in Larwill, Ind., to Sidney and Blanche Gebert. She graduated in 1948 from Larwill High School, and in 1953 from the UW in physical science. Jeanne met the love of her life, Edwin Jacob, while in Detroit. They married in June 1954, in Larwill and moved to McFarland in 1959, and in 1962, they bought their farm there.

Her career as a physical therapist spanned 40 years. Jeanne cared for patients at Madison General Hospital and local nursing homes. Jeanne had a loving heart for animals and was always taking in strays. Jeanne shared her love for animals with the local community as a 4-H club leader. Jeanne loved gardening, antiques, reading and bird watching. Jeanne is preceded in death by her parents, Sidney and Blanche Gebert of Larwill.

Jeanne is survived by her husband, Edwin; brother, Jimmy M. Gebert of Columbia City, Ind.; three children, Warren C. Jacob of Pacific Palisades, Calif., Aaron L. Jacob of McFarland and Lauri J. Arndt of Poynette; two foster sons, Duc and Dinh Phan; and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren in Wisconsin and California.

Jeanne was a devoted member of McFarland Lutheran Church for 59 years.

Kenneth “Ken” Palmer Alsmo, 84,



Ken was born on April 21, 1932, to Ray and Martha Alsmo in McFarland and passed away peacefully on Monday, January 28, 2019, at Agrace Hospice Care, surrounded by his family, following a brief illness. Ken was a veteran of the Korean War, serving from 1952-1954, spending 16 months in Okinawa, and was privileged to participate in the Badger Honor Flight.

Ken played the guitar and was part of the six brothers and sisters comprising the Alsmo Ramblers. He was a frequent visitor to McFarland Historical Society activities. He was able to see the family's farm bell mounted on a post by the society's log cabin and being used on Veteran's Day for the Bells of Peace ringing.

Ken is survived by his wife of 61 years, Marlene (Kittilson); children, Jeff (Janie), Debbie (Bob) O'Malley and Randy (Michelle Schroeder). He is also survived by his six grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren. Ken is further survived by his sister, Margaret Ellestad Stolen; brother, James Alsmo; sisters-in-law, Amy Alsmo, Winnett Alsmo, Lorraine Johnson and brothers-in-law William Martinson, Jerry Fredrick and James Kittilson.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by

his twin brother Kendall, who died at age three; his siblings, Russell, Norman, Alden, Ruth Ann Raedel, Corinne Martinson, Betty Jane who died at age 3, Norma, who was Norman's twin, at age 6 and Russell's twin, Ruby, who died in infancy; his in-laws, Otto and Olga Kittilson, brothers-and sister-in-law, Curtis Ellestad, Ingman Stolen, Larry Raedel, Dorothy Alsmo, Shirlee Martinson, Don Johnson, Joyce Fredrick and his niece Paula (Martinson) Rickert.

Historic Rowboat Renovated

by Gini Dodson

Members Wes Licht, Dale Marsden, Lee Ackley, Bob Kolek, Joe Larson, Mark Finley and Rod Clark restored this historic, double-pointed rowboat during the winter of 2018, with advice and coaching by Tim Kreft. The rowboat was



Ginnie Dodson and Dale Marsden test out Ruthie's Boat.

similar to those rented out by the Larson Beach Resort on Lake Waubesa in the early 1900's. On June 2, 2018, the rowboat was launched at McDaniels Park on Lake Waubesa as part of the Dane County Trails Unite Festival. Board President Dale Marsden and board member Ginny Dodson rode in the restored rowboat and verified that it was watertight! The rowboat is now on display in the new addition of the McFarland Historical Society Museum on Main Street.



John Wendling, Ruth's husband, pictured third from the left, with Rod Clark, Wes Licht, Dale Marsden, Mark Finley, and Lee Ackley after the launching of Ruthie's Boat.

Please renew your membership this year to stay on our rolls.

Your membership and donations help to support the McFarland Historical Society and keeps the museum operating. If you would like to volunteer, let us know. We also have board positions open if you are interested in becoming more active in the Society. Many volunteer their time and energy to make this a successful organization.

I want to support local history as a member of the McFarland Historical Society. Please enroll me as a new or renewal member for 2019.

(Select one membership option)

- Individual \$ 15
- Family \$ 25
- Individual/Family life \$ 150
- Supporting \$ 250
- Business \$ 250

Amount Enclosed: _____

Name(s): _____

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Check here if you would like to receive the newsletter by email in the future.

Make your check payable to:
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 McFarland Historical Society
 P.O. Box 94
 McFarland, WI 53558-0094

Go to www.mcfarlandhistorical.org for a color copy of the newsletter, information and color photos on all McFarland Historical Society activities. Photos are by, Sue Vick-Finley, Jane Licht and Dale Marsden.

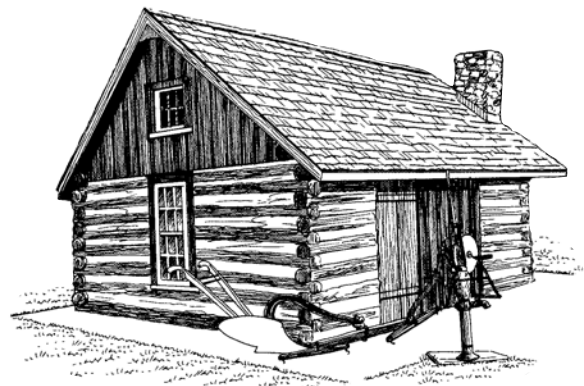
We hope to see you at the Annual Meeting.

McFarland Historical Society
 P.O.Box 94
 McFarland, WI 53558

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 Stamp here



The Larson House



The Log Cabin