

Mineral Point HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dedicated to Preserving the Unique History of Mineral Point

Orchard Lawn Presents a Centenary Event:

Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales*

December 4-7

In celebration of the 100th anniversary of the birth of Dylan Thomas, Wisconsin actor Coleman will reprise his performance of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* December 4-7 in the Victorian parlor of Orchard Lawn, home of the Mineral Point Historical Society. He previously performed this piece to sold-out audiences in 2009 and 2011.



An author, playwright and actor, Coleman has appeared frequently on the Madison stage, including productions for the Children's Theatre of Madison, Madison Theatre Guild, Mercury Players, Strollers and the 9XM Players of Wisconsin Public Radio. His monologue, *Cuban Poetry*, will be included in a February 2015 production by Forward Theatre in the Overture Center. Coleman's memoir, "SPOKE", won the 2014 International

Book Award for best memoir/autobiography. He is a recipient of a Literary Artist Fellowship from the Wisconsin Arts Board, and twice received an artist/community collaboration grant from the WAB. He is a member of Madison's Playwrights Ink, and the Dramatist Guild of America.

Joining Coleman will be Jennifer DeCoste, who will perform Dylan Thomas' *A Visit to Grandpa*, and will also perform several musical selections by Benjamin Britten. Dr. DeCoste is the Chief Diversity Officer at the University of Wisconsin Platteville and a veteran theatre and vocal performer.

"I'm excited to return to the intimate parlor of Orchard Lawn," said Coleman, whose previous Orchard Lawn performances include *An Evening with Edgar Allan Poe* and *A*



Christmas Carol. "There's a magic in this historic room, and sharing this most poetic of all Christmas tales in this setting makes it possible to connect with each audience member in a way that's just not possible in a large house."

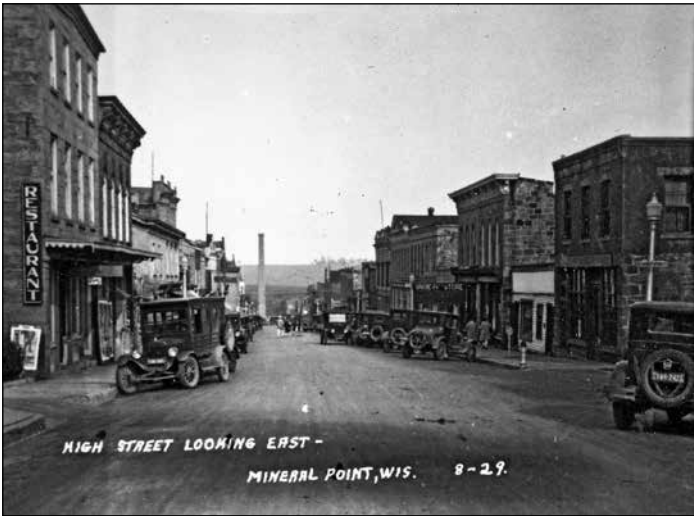
A Child's Christmas in Wales will be performed at 7:30 p.m. on December 4, 5 & 6, and 2 p.m. on December 7. Tickets, at \$15 for adults and \$5 for children, are on sale only at Mineral Point's Berget Jewelers, 257 High Street, 608-987-3218. All proceeds benefit the Mineral Point Historical Society. ●

A Challenge For Santa?

For 39 years, the view down High Street was dominated by the enormous concrete chimney of the power plant of the Mineral Point Public Service Company (later known as Wisconsin Power and Light Company). Built in 1914 and removed in 1953, the construction and destruction were well documented by the local newspapers; their accounts follow in their entirety.



View down High Street from the power station site, before erection of the concrete chimney.



The smokestack of the Mineral Point Public Service Company loomed over Mineral Point for 39 years.



View down High Street from the site after the chimney was built.

Iowa County Democrat, January 29, 1914

NEW POWER PLANT

To Be Built by the Mineral Point Public Service Company

IS NEEDED TO MEET INCREASING BUSINESS

To be on the Site of Present Building and to Be Constructed of Steel, Brick, and Cement

The Mineral Point Public Service Company has decided to erect a new power plant building early in the coming spring. Engineer's were here last week and planning for the building and taking measurements.

The new building will be constructed of steel, brick, and iron and will be on the present site. Its erection is made necessary by the growing demand for electric service. The ice plant, which occupies part of the building, will have to be taken out and the ice business in connection will be discontinued.

The new power plant will be modern in every respect, and will be equipped with the latest machinery, including an overhead electric crane, and other necessary appliances.

A few months later, a clipping, dated only "1914", said:

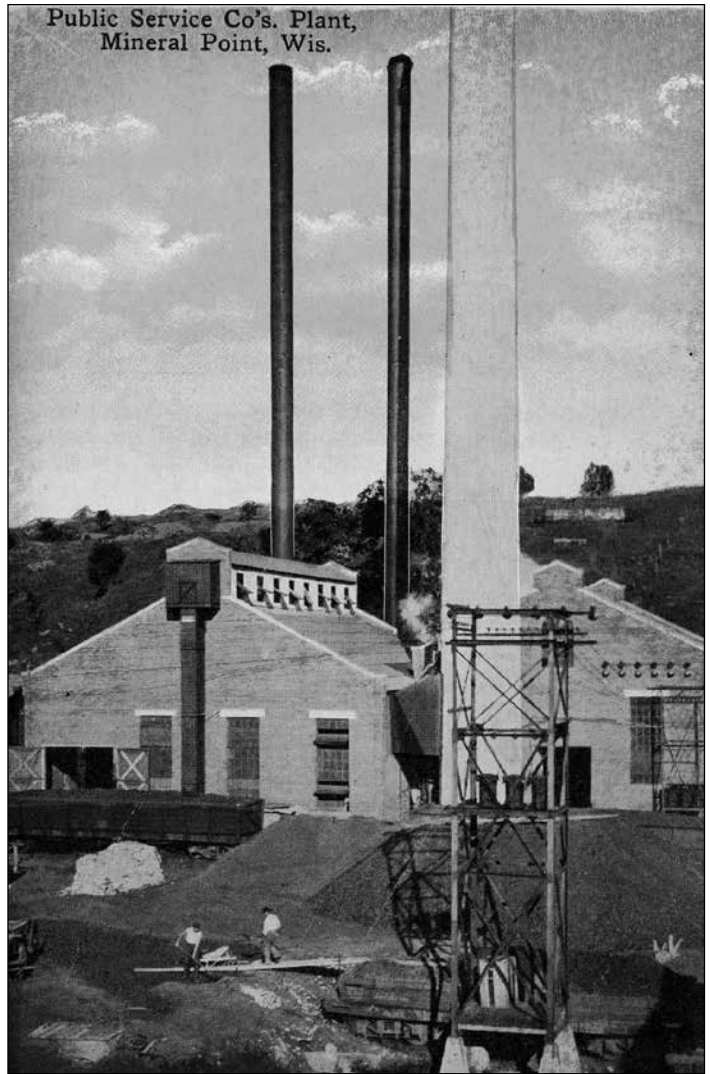
The new smokestack for the Mineral Point Public Service Company looms up imposingly at the foot of High Street. It is of reinforced concrete construction, stands 175 feet in height, and the inside diameter is eight feet.



The power station replaced the Garden City Brewery, built in 1854 by James Argall.

In 1940, the local paper documented an expansion of the building:

Workmen last week put the finishing touches to clearing the ground on the north side of the Power and Light plant. Rocks from the old Garden City Brewery built in 1854 were used to build a wall on one side. The brewery specialized in ale and an old ale bottle was found.



Wisconsin Power and Light Company's power plant, with chimneys.

Finally, in 1953, power for electricity was produced elsewhere and the towering chimney was removed:

Democrat Tribune; May 7, 1953

Smoke Stack, City Landmark, Being Torn Down

The old concrete chimney of the Wisconsin Power and Light Company, a Mineral Point landmark since 1914, is slowly disappearing from the scene.

On April 30th, workmen of the Consolidated Chimney Co. of Chicago began erecting scaffolding, and now are engaged in chipping the chimney apart.

Because of the solid construction of concrete and reinforcing of steel, the work is progressing slowly. It is estimated that it will require two months before the demolition work is completed. Workmen are using air hammers to remove the concrete, while the reinforcing is cut up with acetylene torches.

The chimney towered 185 feet above ground level. It was built by the Webber Chimney co. of Chicago at a cost of \$8,500. As the work progressed upward, the scaffolding was raised to new working levels. The concrete was hoisted to the forms by means of buckets raised with a

gasoline powered engine and winch. Built by the Mineral Point Public Service Co., the power plant construction work in 1914 was a unique operation. It was built entirely around the old power plant, and the old plant remained in operation during the entire construction period. When completed the new plant had seven boilers which were stoker fired. They furnished steam for an Allis-Chalmers turbo-generator of 1500 kilowatts capacity, a Westinghouse turbo-generator of 1250 kilowatts capacity, and also for a reciprocating Nordberg steam engine which turned a 600 kilowatt Crocker-Wheeler generator.

At that time the Mineral Point Public Service Co. furnished power for Linden, Dodgeville, Cobb, Highland, Montfort, Rewey, Livingston, and Mifflin, as well as for Mineral Point. The old power plant was put on a stand-by basis in 1914 when transmission connection was made with the Interstate Light and Power Co. at Platteville, and was entirely shut down early in 1919. The Mineral Point Public Service Co. became a part of the Wisconsin Power & Light Co. System in 1924. ●

Number, Please

Now that we all carry our phones in our pockets, we don't think of how recently we needed an actual person to connect a telephone call. In Mineral Point, all calls used to go through the exchange located on N. Chestnut Street. The building was taken down in 1977, replaced by a newer building just north of it. The story of the old building was documented in the Democrat Tribune, on July 14, 1977 (below).

Old Phone Building Coming Down

by Bruce McNeill

Recently in Mineral Point, the Ivey Construction Company has been tearing down the old telephone building. The structure was built in 1923 by the then Commonwealth Telephone company. They later changed their name to "General Telephone." The building is located between the Farmers Savings Bank and the new telephone building.

Mrs Ruth Hunt was the first chief operator at the new site. She held that position from 1923 until 1937. Also tied in with the task as chief operator was the cashier's job. Mrs hunt told me she had worked in the bank building before she moved into the new building.

Following Mrs. Hunt as chief operator in 1937 was Mrs. Helen Johnson. She had been working for the phone company for 10 years before she took over the important position. The chief's job was to supervise the other switchboard operators and take in bills. She retired shortly after the new telephone buildings was built at its present site. The new edifice was constructed because the dial system came to Mineral Point. The old building was officially closed at 7 a.m. on July 29, 1964.

Mrs. Della Aide was chief operator for a brief interim in 1945. She left that job in 1946. She said the phone company wouldn't let you work for them anymore if you got married. Although she did defy the rule because she didn't retire from the business until 1967. She was, for the most part, one of the regular operators. She had several transfers to such towns as Dodgeville, Spring Green and Edgerton.

These three ladies were all very happy to have been associated with the telephone company for those many years. They each told me the same thing about the problems with storms. They said that whenever a bad storm occurred, everyone was calling their neighbors to find out how they were getting along. This caused the switchboard to be very busy. Mrs. Aide said that they simply didn't have enough plugs to cope with all the calls she said that then the people used t get mad at the operators.

No doubt the telephone building will be missed by the operators who worked there. For them, it was their career. What used to be "number please" when called is now just a simple "hello." ●



The Commonwealth Telephone, later General Telephone, building in 1970.



The newer building, constructed in 1977.



Telephone operators connecting one caller to another.

A Busy Corner

Fountain Street, especially at its intersection with Vine, has been an important part of Mineral Point industry since the early days.

J. Lanyon, Sr., built a foundry on the southeast corner of this intersection in 1867. According to the *History of Iowa County, 1881*, page 702: "Prominent among the manufacturing interests of Mineral Point, is the foundry and machine shop of Lanyon & Brother. This business was established in 1849, by J. Lanyon, Sr., and first located on Commerce street, near the present depot. In this location, Mr. Lanyon, Sr., continued the foundry business until 1867, when he erected the present shop on the corner of Fountain and Vine streets. During the latter year, he was succeeded in business by his two sons, John and Josiah, under the firm name of J. Lanyon & Brother."

According to the Sanborn maps, the buildings were still there in 1889, although "dilapidated". A photo from 1900 or later (as evidenced by the presence of the Hotel Royal in the background) shows a large fenced off pit where the foundry buildings once stood. By 1916, the Auto Inn, later the home of J. E. Engels's car dealership, stood on that corner.

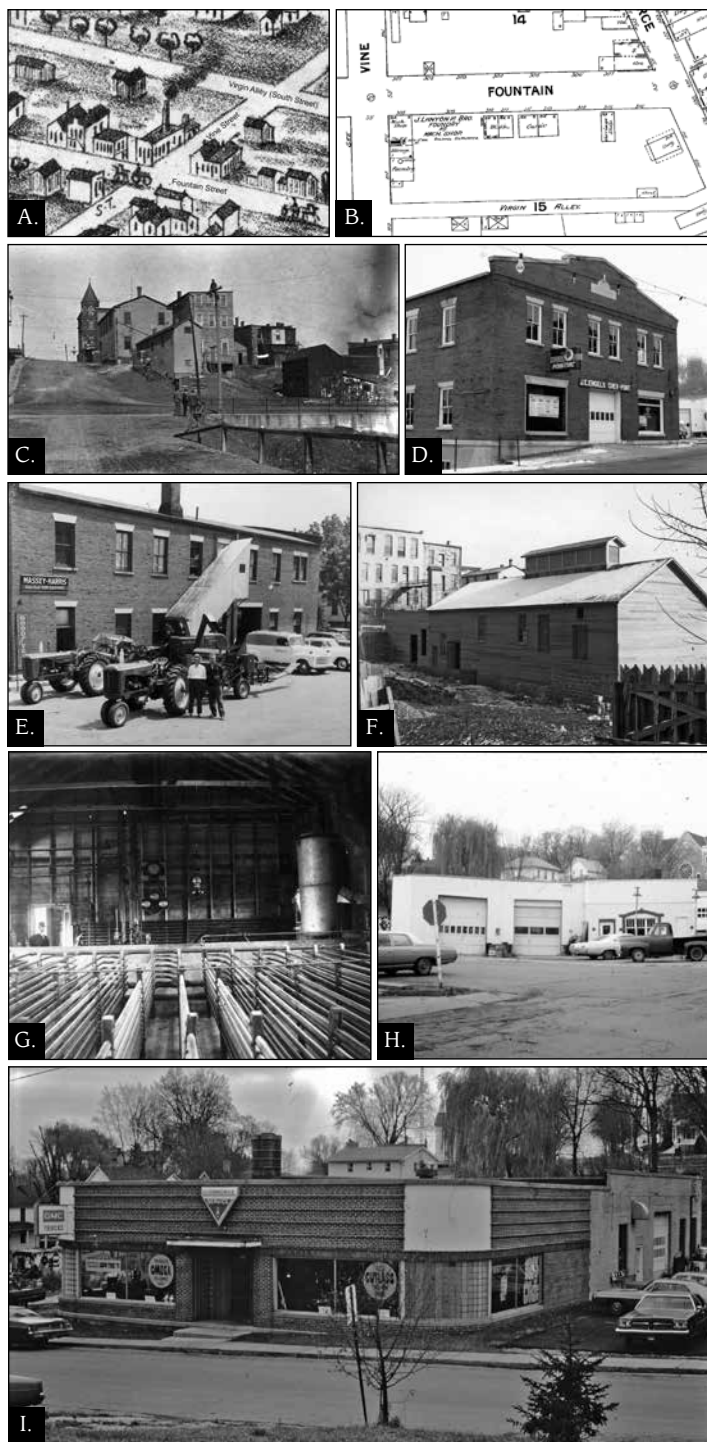
The southwest corner was also the site of significant activity over the years. Residences were on the corner, originally, but by 1905 *The Democrat Tribune* said "The Ludden Works, started in the spring of 1903, has developed into a great plant, in addition to making ice, it furnishes steam heat to many public and private buildings. Among them, the primitive Methodist Church, the Fourth Ward School, Hotel Royal, and the Masonic Temple."

In 1919 the newspaper reported "The Mineral Point Heating Company has been organized with a capital of twelve thousand dollars. It will be located on Fountain Street on the site of the old Ludden Steam heating and ice plant."

The Ludden Works were the achievement of Frank C. Ludden who came to Mineral Point in 1886 to operate the Economy Store for his father. In 1892 he married Ella Vivian, daughter of Dr. John H. Vivian.

According to his obituary, Frank Ludden built and operated an artificial ice plant in Mineral Point. Later he built and operated the Central Heating Plant here. About 1906 he purchased the electric light plant of Mr. W. A. Jones, rebuilt it, and installed one of the first turbine engines in the state, and extended power lines to Linden, Mifflin, Livingston, Rewey, Montfort, Cobb and Dodgeville.

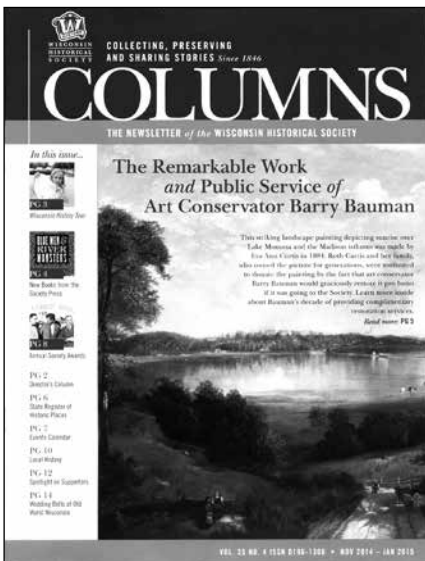
The heating company buildings were eventually replaced by the Harker, Marr & Gordon service station. In 1949, the company built a new building on the lot just to the west of the gas station. The *Mineral Point Tribune* of Jan. 13, 1949 said "A crowd of over 1,200 helped Harker, Marr, & Gordon to open their large new building to the public on Tuesday, January 11. The building, of brick, steel, and glass block, is one of the finest in the state." The same edition also noted that "Harker, Marr & Gordon announce that they have procured Bruce Bennett as manager and operator of their filling and service station which was vacated when they moved their machinery and garage business into their new building." ●



A. The birdseye Map of 1872 shows the Lanyon Foundry on the southeast corner of Fountain and Vine. B. The Sanborn map of 1889 details the Lanyon foundry buildings but describes them as dilapidated. C. A photo in the Mineral Point Library Archives records a pit on the corner of Fountain and Vine, the foundry buildings having been removed. D. The Auto Inn occupied that corner by 1916. E. The Auto Inn later became the site of J. Engels auto and farm implement dealership. F. The ice house on Fountain Street, part of the Ludden Works which provided artificial ice as well as steam heat. G. The ice making machinery inside the ice house. I. The Harker, Marr & Gordon service station replaced the steam heating plant. J. The Harker, Marr & Gordon garage, opened in 1949.

MPHS Friend Recognized

The most recent issue of *Columns*, the newsletter of the Wisconsin Historical Society, features Art Conservator Barry Bauman. In addition to conserving 60 paintings for the Wisconsin Historical Society, Mr. Bauman restored the MPHS' oil painting of Ena Hutchison, as detailed in our May, 2014 newsletter. *Columns* is mailed to members of the Wisconsin Historical Society, as is their outstanding *Wisconsin Magazine of History*. If you are not yet a member, you might want to consider signing up. Go to www.wisconsinhistory.org for more information. ●



The Golliner Machine Shop repaired cars, trucks, tractors, and all sorts of machinery in addition to manufacturing boilers for businesses like cheese companies. Photograph courtesy of Bill Buckingham.

Golliner's Machine Shop

Another important business on Fountain Street was Golliner's Machine Shop. Fred Golliner, Jr. and his crew fabricated and repaired machinery of all types. An early ad called attention to their acetylene welding and "best lathe and machine work obtainable." A good part of the business was the manufacture of large copper boilers for cheese factories all over southern Wisconsin.

Bill Buckingham, Fred's nephew, recalls visiting the shop and watching the workers throw hot rivets from the stove up to the workers on the boilers who caught and attached them. Bill also recalls taking his sled in to the shop after a run-in or two with a rock and having Uncle Fred weld the runners back into shape.

The 1940 federal census shows Fred Golliner and his wife, Mary, living at 321 Maiden Street. Fred is listed as proprietor, boiler company, and Mary as bookkeeper.

When Fred died in 1941, Mary continued to operate the business on her own. In 1946 the local newspaper ran a short paragraph about her: "Right under the nose of practically everyone in Mineral Point is one of the most unusual business operations in the United States. It is that of Mrs. May Golliner, who, as a lady boilermaker, is one of the two women in the country engaged in this business."

The building, at 12 Fountain Street, was built in 1917. Today it houses The Pear & Salvage Home. ●



HELP US CELEBRATE
SAVE THE DATE 2/15/15

MINERAL POINT MUNICIPAL BUILDING
CENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION

100 YEARS: 1915-2015

MINERAL POINT PUBLIC LIBRARY | MINERAL POINT OPERA HOUSE | MINERAL POINT CITY HALL

The Mineral Point Municipal Building, housing the Mineral Point Public Library, City Hall, and the Opera House turns 100 in 2015. The Centennial Committee is collecting reminiscences and stories about all three parts of the building. Please add to the history of this significant building. Send your memories and stories to Mineral Point City Hall, 137 High Street, Mineral Point, WI 53565 or by email to mpmbcentennial@gmail.com ●



Notes from the President

By Matt Ostergrant, President, Mineral Point Historical Society

The Child Within

Enter the front door of an imposing sandstone mansion in early December and arrive in the late 19th century amid low lighting, rich colors, patterns and textures on the floor, ceiling and walls and the faint smell of wood smoke in the air. Hang up your coat and find a seat in the double parlor where candles flicker atop the Front Parlor's marble mantle while a fire crackles away in the ornate Back Parlor fireplace, producing the aroma that greeted you in the entry. An electric chandelier, installed in 1891, with its gentle, warm light and an oil portrait of a beautiful young woman welcome you to sit, get comfortable and enjoy a special event that is about to commence with the Back Parlor as stage and the Front Parlor as a miniature auditorium.

Yes, Virginia, you are invited to experience live theater and music this December at Orchard Lawn, the venue of outstanding holiday presentations past, present and yet to be. Afterward, wander into the restored Dining Room and Library to enjoy light refreshments and cozy up to another glowing fireplace in the Library while visiting with friends and performers.

We feel the best way to experience an historic structure is to use it and what better way to do so than to attend Coleman's presentation of *A Child's Christmas in Wales* by the great Welsh master, Dylan Thomas, with music and an additional presentation by Jennifer deCoste. As a holiday gift to MPHS, Coleman has generously arranged these performances as a fundraiser for the Society, thereby helping to perpetuate Orchard Lawn as a venue for future presentations while also commemorating the centenary of Thomas' birth. So treat yourself while helping MPHS and join us for a very special trip across the Atlantic and back to childhood. On behalf of the Society I wish you all the very best! ●

Dues and Annual Fund Time

It's that time again - time to renew your membership in the Mineral Point Historical Society — or sign up as a new member.

The MPHS depends on its many loyal members for their ongoing support. Your dues and annual gifts literally keep the lights on, as well as the furnace in the winter and the air conditioner in the summer. Your dues print the newsletter, take care of the trees and grounds, and provide for the essentials that allows your society to continue to preserve and promote the stories of Mineral Point.

The MPHS can't do without the hundreds of hours provided by volunteers throughout the year, but we also need a certain amount of cash to keep everything going.

The membership renewal letter will be arriving in your mailbox soon. Please sign up for, or renew, your membership and add as much of an additional gift as you can. We need your help to keep the history of Mineral Point alive and well. ●

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Mineral Point Historical Society Membership Form

January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2015

All members receive the newsletter and free tours of Orchard Lawn.

Please check one:

- Individual (\$15.00)
- Family (\$25.00)
- Business (\$50.00)

Additional Contribution: \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

Make checks payable to the Mineral Point Historical Society and return this form to:

Mineral Point Historical Society
P.O. Box 188 • Mineral Point, WI 53565

Thank you again for your support!

Please remember to mail your membership dues.

Mineral Point HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dedicated to Preserving the Unique History of Mineral Point

P.O. Box 188 • 234 Madison Street
Mineral Point, WI 53565
608.558.1937

Mark Your Calendars

A Child's Christmas in Wales

Thursday, Friday, Saturday
December 4, 5 & 6, 2014 • 7:30 p.m.
Sunday, December 7, 2014 • 2:00 p.m.
all performances at Orchard Lawn,
234 Madison St. Mineral Point

Annual Meeting and Lyceum

Early Bank Notes of Mineral Point
with Bob McNeill
at the former bank building
203 High Street, Mineral Point
January 25, 2015 • 2:00 p.m.

Lyceums

Sunday, Feb. 22, 2015 and
Sunday, March 22, 2015 • 2:00 p.m.
Topic and location to be announced

Change Service Requested

www.mineralpointhistory.org



The 185 foot chimney of the Mineral Point Public Service Company provided a great vantage point for a birdseye view of the town. This photo was taken some time after 1914, when the chimney was constructed, and before 1916, when the Auto Inn was built on the southeast corner of Fountain and Vine.