

Mineral Point HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Dedicated to Preserving the Unique History of Mineral Point

2016 BOARD MEMBERSHIP CHANGES

by Joel Gosse

The 2015 calendar year marked the departure of several board members beginning with Nancy Pfothenhauer, who is focusing more of her talents and expertise to the Mineral Point Library Archives. In the final month of this past year, four other members decided to step down after many years of membership to allow an influx of newer members. Their time and efforts helped maintain MPHS through the past several years and to help sow the seeds for new projects with MPHS in the years to follow. It is with great respect that we salute Joy Gieseke, Dick Ivey, Nancy Pfothenhauer, Peter Pfothenhauer, and Carl Tunestam for their time and efforts while serving on the board. Although they are no longer serving on the board, they will continue to offer occasional assistance and guidance to MPHS, as well as their continued support and talents to the Mineral Point community.

New board members were elected at the Annual Meeting and a brief meeting was held at the beginning of February to confirm the offices of MPHS President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary. The new board members are Paige Grimm, Mark Hogan, Nancy Schmit, Lyn Strangstad, and Shan Thomas. With the current standing members Judith Clayton, Joel Gosse, Lucille May, and Diane Stuart, the MPHS board totals nine members at this time. Of these nine members the officers for this year were elected as Diane Stuart, President; Judith Clayton, Vice President; Shan Thomas, Treasurer; Nancy Schmit, Secretary. Ainsley Anderson continues in her role as Executive Director.

PAIGE GRIMM

Ms. Grimm is a resident of Mineral Point for 30 years. During this time she has worked in the Mineral Point School District as an elementary school teacher. Her favorite part of her position is teaching the State of Wisconsin's traditional 4th grade module of Wisconsin history.

MARK HOGAN

Mr. Hogan is a retired architect, the former owner of a design firm specializing in the repair and renovation of existing building exteriors. He moved to Mineral Point from Chicago a year and one-half ago. He has since used his professional background to renovate his own historic Victorian Italianate home located across from Water Tower Park.

NANCY SCHMIT

Ms. Schmit's association with Mineral Point spans more than 40 years. Throughout these years, Ms. Schmit has learned that the MPHS is so much more than just a house or a link to the past. It is an organization working hard to preserve and advance the special character of the Mineral Point community and the treasure it is.

LYN STRANGSTAD

Ms. Strangstad is a Wisconsinite who has worked in historic preservation for over 35 years. Trained in New York in architectural conservation by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, she moved to Charleston, SC, and started a business specializing in the preservation of historic burial grounds. She returned to Wisconsin about 20 years ago and then relocated to Mineral Point. She has undertaken conservation and preservation planning for such sites as the cemeteries of the Old Dutch Church of Sleepy Hollow, Boot Hill of Deadwood, South Dakota, and the Colonial Cemetery of Savannah, Georgia. She is author of the pioneering and fundamental book on historic graveyard preservation, *A Graveyard Preservation Primer*.

SHAN THOMAS

Ms. Thomas has 20 years of experience in nonprofit and government management, including eight years as an administrative director where she oversaw grants and

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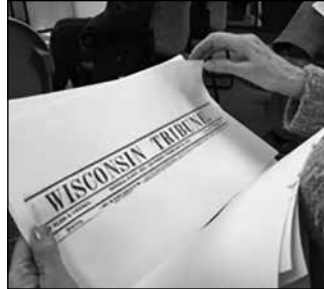
January Lyceum Spotlights MINERAL POINT'S EARLY PRESS

by Judith Clayton

With a good crowd and spirited efficiency, the MPHS combined the Society's Annual Meeting with its first Lyceum of 2016, which was held on Sunday, January 17. Nearly 50 hardy folks braved sub-zero temperatures to attend the afternoon gathering in the City Hall Meeting Room.

Outgoing president Joy Gieseke presided over the meeting's business, which included election of five new MPHS board members; they are Paige Grimm, Mark Hogan, Nancy Schmit, Lyn Strangstad, and Shan Thomas. Continuing their terms on the Board will be Judith Clayton, Joel Gosse, and Lucille May. In addition to Joy, retiring Board members include Dick Ivey, Carl Tunestam, Nancy Pfothauer, Peter Pfothauer, and Carl Tunestam, who were thanked for their generous service. Further proceedings included a review of MPHS 2015 highlights by Ainsley Anderson, Executive Director.

The January Lyceum topic was an entertaining look at Mineral Point's early newspapers, which established a proud journalistic tradition. Most of the program involved readings by Ainsley Anderson, Judy DeVido, Joy Gieseke, and Joel Gosse of the actual clippings from our town's historic press.



Top left: Due to technical difficulties, the Lyceum had to revert to the original method of viewing the mastheads on paper instead of projecting the images.

Top right: Presenters and readers pictured (left to right): Joel Gosse, Ainsley Anderson, Joy Gieseke, and Judy DeVido.

Highlights included comment on Mineral Point's earliest paper, which was the *Miners' Free Press*. It was begun in 1837, when Henry Welsh and Henry Plowman moved their press and type from Galena, via oxcart, to set up business here.

An amusing extract from the *History of Iowa County* comments on the excitement and dangers experienced in the lives of Mineral Point's early newspaper editors:

The terrible and sanguinary fierceness of some of those early encounters is hardly describable; neither can the coolness and determination which was characteristic of most of those men be fully comprehended. At one time, while H. B. Welch was editing the *Miners' Free Press*, and Charles Bracken, the stern old pioneer, was conducting the *Galena Commonwealth*, Welch published an article peculiarly odious to the opposing journalist. As a result, the first time they met, Bracken deliberately cowhided Welch. One day, not long after, Mr. Bracken was walking leisurely down High street, leading a horse, when Welch came out of his log building, which stood on the Coade lot. No. 41, armed with shot-gun and pistols, and started in pursuit of Bracken, firing at him as he went. Within a minute the male residents of High and Commerce streets were out looking on in great excitement, but nothing was done except



that different parties stepped forward with pistols for the belligerents. Mr. Bracken turned neither to the right nor the left, but walked along until he reached Commerce street, Welch having in the meantime shot at him six times; then he turned, coolly drew a pistol, and, taking deliberate aim, fired at his antagonist, laying him out, but not killing him. Bracken then, without more ado, pursued his way.

Records show that for about a hundred years, Mineral Point was served by a succession of publishing efforts, often sporadic, some very short-lived,

and always reflecting changing social pressures and opinions. Newspapers included: *Mineral Point Democrat*, *Wisconsin Tribune*, *Mineral Point Tribune*, *Home Intelligencer*, *Iowa County Democrat*, and *National Democrat*.

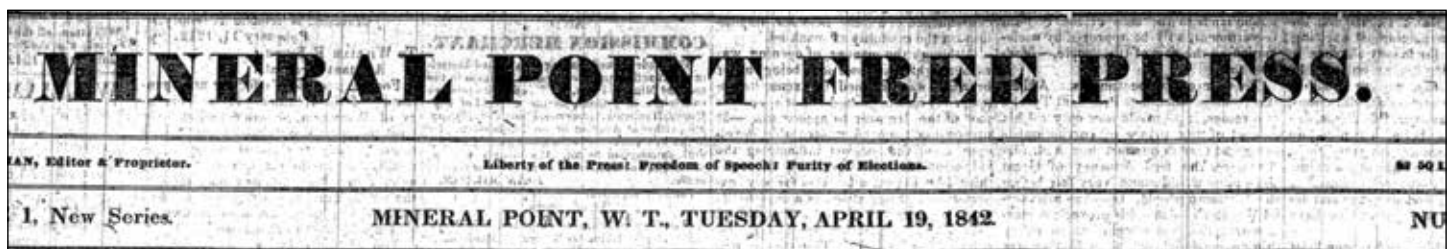
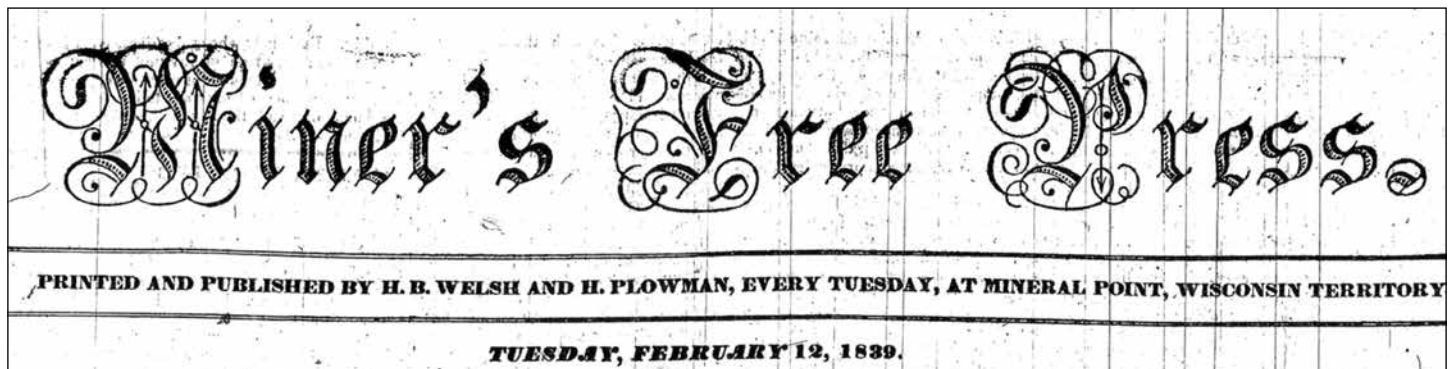
In 1938, the *Iowa County Democrat* and *Mineral Point Tribune* merged into the present-day *Mineral Point Democrat Tribune*.

It is interesting to note that the *Dodgeville Chronicle* almost became a Mineral Point newspaper: in 1862, a Dr. Cowan, who owned half of the newspaper's shares thought of moving the press to Mineral Point. He was ready to move the press by wagon, when other shareholders intervened and 'persuaded' him not to do so.

Through the generosity of MPHS membership, Lyceums are free and open to the public. ●



Joy Gieseke reading one of the sample articles gathered from past newspapers.



13,983 Obituaries Saved at Public Library

(courtesy of Mineral Point Public Library Archives)

On Thursday, January 14, after two years of work, Mineral Point Library Archives Volunteer Joel Gosse typed the final name into a new obituary index.

The story begins with the late Janice Terrill, Curator of the Mineral Point Room/Archives from 1989-2000, who originally used newspaper files to type these same 13,983 obituaries into a computer that would be considered an antique today.

The database is a wonderful resource, beginning alphabetically with Gussie Penberthy Abbott and ending with Rosina Zweifel. A Mrs. Logue has the earliest birth year (probably born in Ireland) of about 1760. She died in Willow Springs in 1859.

The antique computer is still running, but for how long? Trying to technically transfer the information to a newer computer was a risky business that could have resulted in the loss of the index.

Gosse volunteered to retype every entry into an up-to-date program on a newer computer. Together, Terrill and Gosse have created a valuable and searchable obituary index for genealogists of today and tomorrow. ●



Joel Gosse prepares to type in the last entry to the database.

From the Executive Director

by Ainsley Anderson



The February thaw is upon us as I write this column. With the dripping and the melting comes great anticipation of the activities of the upcoming months. Orchard Lawn promises to be a flurry of activity as new restoration work commences. Of course, there's always a project with an older house. Many of our members and our neighbors are well aware of the tremendous amount of time and energy that go into a restoration project. It's always a thrill to see the good work of preservation and restoration happening in our town. I've written before about the 'sense of place' in Mineral Point. Restoration and preservation are key to this philosophy. They are what make Mineral Point seem practically magical, especially to those whose eyes are beholding all we have to offer for the first time.

Twenty-Sixteen marks the 50th anniversary of the National Historic Preservation Act. As Mineral Point was the first community in Wisconsin to receive National Register of Historic Places recognition, we are observing the anniversary with a weekend of historic preservation events in May. The event will include a wide-scale open house highlighting significant historic properties in Mineral Point. We hope to draw guests from all over the midwest to town the weekend of May 13-15 to celebrate the importance of preservation and Mineral Point's dedication to preserving our unique sense of place.

We encourage you to join us for this weekend. In addition, we encourage you to revisit Orchard Lawn this spring and summer to experience the new preservation efforts. We are thankful for our members, our neighbors, and our friends. The Mineral Point Historical Society celebrates the history that we are all making together in this community. Here's to another 50 years of dedicated preservation. ●

A Look at the Edgar Hellum Papers at Pendarvis

by Shan Thomas

Last winter, I volunteered to arrange and describe the private papers of Edgar Hellum, co-founder of Pendarvis House (which is now the Pendarvis Historical Site) and his partner, in business and life, Robert Neal. Edgar's papers had been stored in their original bags and boxes since coming to the Pendarvis Historic Site after Edgar's death in 2000. Since then, the budget of the State Historical Society has not included the services of an archivist to sort through the papers and describe the contents for researcher's use. A volunteer like me with the right credentials was warmly received.

Looking through the papers it became clear that there are two groups of records. First, there are documents and photographs pertaining to Edgar's family and his life with Bob Neal. The second and larger group of documents are records, photographs and architectural drawings regarding the administration of Pendarvis House restaurant and the various buildings Edgar and Bob rehabilitated over the years.

Record Series I contains Edgar's personal papers. Here a researcher may find biographical background ranging from Edgar's first driving license to his grade school report cards and 30 years of Christmas cards from Max and Ava Fernekes. More important are the 99 letters that Edgar wrote to Bob Neal during the first 14 years of their relationship. Beginning in 1935

and ending in 1949, the bulk of the letters cover 1943 to 1945 during World War II when Edgar and Bob were separated by their war duties. During those years, Edgar worked on the McCormick estate located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and Bob worked preparing meals for the military at Truax Field in Madison, WI. The letters are full of ideas for restoring the buildings they both admired and getting Pendarvis House up and running. Also, the letters offer much insight into their personal relationship.

The Record Series II contains the business records of Pendarvis House. It includes copies of menus, handwritten recipes, lists of their customers for saffron cake, as well as extensive press clippings and magazine tear sheets. The latter make clear how famous Hellum and Neal became in a short period of time. Four reservation books are included as well as tax returns and payroll records. There are extensive files of paid receipts indicating what they bought and from whom. The receipts cover 28 years and show how much their work supported local businesses.

An interesting group of files contain correspondence between Edgar and Bob with Gordon McCormick, grandson of Cyrus McCormick, inventor of the McCormick Reaper. The material covers 21 years, from 1936 to 1957, and includes correspondence between Edgar and Bob and Gordon and Gordon's architect, W.C. Heimbeck. For many years, Gordon's secretary and bookkeeper kept the Pendarvis House books for Edgar and Bob. Much of the architecture planning and business management advice came from Gordon and Heimbeck. It is clear from these files what a crucial role Gordon McCormick played in the success of Pendarvis House and Edgar and Bob's building rehabilitation ventures.

It is a remarkable collection that sheds light on Edgar's background and his relationship with Bob Neal. The records make clear the sacrifices they made to do the work they did – work that is now credited as instrumental in directing Mineral Point towards a brighter future that we enjoy and appreciate today. ●

COMMENTS WELCOMED

Please let us know what articles you found interesting, or even not so interesting. Also, if you have an interest or curiosity into some aspect of Mineral Point history, let us know and we will do some research on it. If there is enough information, we will write an article on it for the newsletter.

Send comments/questions to: Mineral Point Historical Society, PO Box 188, Mineral Point, WI 53565, or by email to: mphs@mineralpointhistory.org.

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operating expenses. Later, Ms. Thomas re-organized the Luther College Archives and earned a degree in Archival Administration while doing so. She came to Wisconsin in 2001 and became a freelance archivist until her retirement four years ago. Relatively new to Mineral Point, she is in love with the city, its story, and its people. "I've been fortunate to live in some remarkable places but none of them beat Mineral Point."

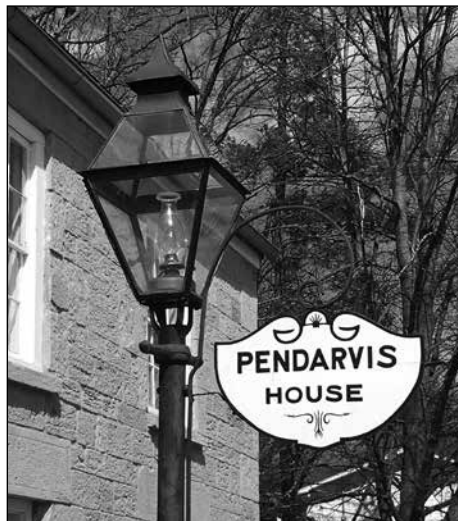
Most of the new board members are not new to Mineral Point or historical preservation and are ready and able to successfully steward the society into 2016 and onward.

Editor's note: Since the time this article was written, unfortunately Paige Grimm has had to resign from her position due to other commitments. ●

Events to Commemorate the National Historic Preservation Act

The Mineral Point Chamber of Commerce and the Mineral Point Historical Society will present “Mineral Point Preservation Weekend” on Saturday, May 14 and Sunday, May 15, 2016, to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the signing of the National Historic Preservation Act. Without preservation of historic sites, Mineral Point’s unique charm and character would not be what it is today. The celebration will include the following events:

- “50 Open Doors: Mineral Point” will be a citywide open house consisting of “open doors” in multiple locations throughout town on Saturday, May 14 from 10AM-4PM. Locations will include public properties, businesses, and private residences. This one-day event will provide a glimpse into the various stages and methods of preservation. From the past work of Bob Neal and Edgar Hellum’s Trelawney to the current restoration at Orchard Lawn. “50 Open Doors: Mineral Point” will tell the story of Mineral Point’s preservation efforts. Tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the Mineral Point Chamber of Commerce office, 225 High Street, phone (608) 987-3201.
- On the evening of Saturday, May 14, the public will be welcome to attend a dinner and program at The Walker House, celebrating “Ten Dollar House,” the play that will be performed the following day, and the tradition of preservation in Mineral Point. Advance tickets for this dinner can be purchased for \$25 from the Mineral Point Chamber of Commerce. Starting at 6PM, this event will feature a presentation by playwrights Martha Meyer and Rick Kinnebrew. The play’s cast and crew will be in attendance.
- The play “Ten Dollar House” will be presented in a matinee performance on Sunday, May 15, 2PM at the Mineral Point Opera House. Tickets are \$10 and can be purchased in advance at Berget Jewelers, 225 High Street, or at the Opera House at the time of the performance. “Ten Dollar House” celebrates the work and relationship of Bob Neal and Edgar Hellum, whose Pendarvis and Trelawney Houses set a course in Mineral Point’s history affecting who we are as a community. The play explores the story of Bob and Edgar’s partnership and their work preserving Pendarvis House. The performance is made possible through the partnership of the Mineral Point Opera House, Pendarvis State Historical Site, and the Mineral Point Historical Society. ●



<p>2016 MPHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS</p> <p>Diane Stuart, President Judith Logue Clayton, Vice President Shan Thomas, Treasurer Nancy Schmit, Secretary Ainsley Anderson, Executive Director</p>
<p>BOARD MEMBERS</p> <p>Judith Logue Clayton Joel Gosse Mark Hogan Lucille May Lyn Strangstad Diane Stuart Shan Thomas</p>
<p>NEWSLETTER EDITOR</p> <p>Joel Gosse</p>
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Mineral Point Historical Society Membership Form

January 1, 2016 to December 31, 2016
All members receive the newsletter and free tours of Orchard Lawn.

Please check one:

Individual (\$15)
 Household (\$25)
 Friend (\$50)
 Historian (\$100)
 Sustainer (\$250)

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

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

Lyceum

“Mineral Pointers Remember:
Mineral Point Food Traditions –
Program and Potluck”

Sunday, April 17, 2016, 11:30 AM at the
Methodist Church, 400 Doty Street,
Mineral Point. Please plan to bring a
dish to offer at the event.

Mineral Point Preservation Weekend

- **50 Open Doors: Mineral Point**
Saturday, May 14, 10 AM to 4 PM. \$20
- **Ten Dollar House**
Reception Dinner/Program
Saturday, May 14, 6 PM, Walker House,
1 Water Street, Mineral Point. \$25
- **Ten Dollar House Performance**
Sunday, May 15, 2 PM, Mineral Point
Opera House, 139 High Street,
Mineral Point. \$10

Change Service Requested

www.mineralpointhistory.org



The *Mineral Point Tribune* office and surrounding businesses, ca. 1900. The office was located on the second floor at 242 High Street. Around 1907 this building was razed and replaced with the current building housing the Bargain Nook. (Courtesy of Mineral Point Library Archives.)