



LYNDON AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY – “Bridging the Past with the Future”
February 2016 Annual Newsletter

Mission Statement

- To restore the Lyndon Area Historical Society to a viable community asset
- To convert the sanctuary for public use – celebrations and events
- To preserve and archive Lyndon’s venerable history
- To create a media, technology, and genealogy center

Reflections, Resolutions, Restorations, and Stewardship

Our many challenges find resolve as we reflect upon our commitment - our stewardship. The last service at the Lyndon Congregational Church was held on December 24, 1986. The trustees of the church had entered into an agreement with the original Lyndon Historical Society which had been chartered in 1975. Over a period of 10 years, the historical society would then take full possession of the building, contents, and grounds as a permanent meeting site and museum for preserving Lyndon artifacts.

“The Lyndon Historical Society deeply appreciates the generous offer by the church Trustees and will maintain the building so the community will always have a reminder of the contributions that the people of Lyndon Congregational Church have made to the total life of Lyndon throughout the years.” (Daily Gazette 12/23/1986)

Our commitment holds firm. 2010 marks the year when the current board assumed responsibility of the facility. In 5 years the facility – a sleeping treasure - has been reawakened! The sanctuary is beautifully restored. An exhibit hall showcases our varied displays. Events, programs, fundraisers, and exhibits have brought in over 1500 visitors.

Carol Crady, Dale Ann Cook, Lois Pilgrim, and Lindy Greenwood - our archivists - meticulously work to preserve our history. Carol Crady, our genealogist, provides families with insight into their proud Lyndon roots. A genealogy research policy has been developed by our board and can be downloaded from our website. Through the efforts of Carol and John Crady and Connie Boonstra, Lyndon now has its own *Little Free Library*. There are over 36,000 Little Free Library exchanges worldwide (littlefreelibrary.org). The idea is simple, take a book...leave a book. Our Little Free Library is outside the museum and brightly colored. You can’t miss it! We have books for all ages.

Fall of 2015 marked the attainment of a most critical milestone. A new metal roof and gutter system were installed. An unexpected yet equally critical issue also challenged our resolve in 2015. The steeple’s stained glass window experienced significant damage. Only providence can account for this magnificent piece not toppling to the cement steps below. Thanks to the timely efforts of Gary Sutton and Jim Fisk, the window was painstakingly removed. The window has since been totally rebuilt by New Morning Glass Mt. Carroll, Illinois. It is crated and stored, waiting to be reinstalled this spring. We are working to provide backlighting for this window. A much needed exterior cleaning and painting are scheduled for spring 2016 as well.

As our financial resources are rebuilt, our next projects will focus on improved facility accessibility. A motorized chair lift to the downstairs fellowship hall and a handicapped accessible restroom are on our resolve “to-do-list”. Repair and painting of the kitchen walls also need attention. Please remember!! We are sustained through fiscal diligence, generosity, ingenuity, optimism, volunteerism, and elbow-grease. **Annual membership dues, donations, and memorials are critical to our continued existence.**

2015 Finances

To assist us in the formidable roofing expenses, Connie Boonstra and Kris Bielema applied for a grant through the Kenneth S. and Arletta E. Moore Foundation. In August 2015, the grant was approved and \$8000 was awarded. \$7462 was received through dues, donations, memorials, genealogy research fees, facility usage fees, and memorabilia sales. Our fundraisers brought in an additional \$5000.

Expenses totaled \$11,302.74: Utilities = \$1280, annual newsletter = \$283, insurance = \$898, website annual fee = \$108. The remainder of the expenses reflects: postage, archival/office materials, registration fees, event costs, general supplies, repairs/maintenance, and the rebuilding of the stained glass window. The insurance premium will increase by \$200 for 2016. As of this date, we have not yet received the final billing for the roof and gutters which is estimated at \$18,000. Upon request, detailed monthly treasurer reports are available for your review.

Tax-Exempt Status

LAHS is a 501 c (3) tax-exempt nonprofit organization. All monetary donations are tax deductible. Forms are available at the museum to verify those donations/memorials.

2015 in Review

Our first full board meeting was held in March. Plans were immediately undertaken to host a spring trivia night in April. It was a great success! The historical society provided the Bounce House for the annual Wright Family Easter Egg Hunt at Richmond Park. Our annual yard sale was held in May. Through the summer months, Connie Stern reserved the facility for several basket weaving classes. Sauk Media interviewed us for the Fall/Winter 2015 issue of **Small Town Living** magazine. It is a nice article entitled – *“They’re Making History in Lyndon”*. Partnering with the Village of Lyndon and the Prophetstown High School Leo and Art Clubs, the 2nd annual Bridge Bash was held the last Sunday in September. The celebration featured pork chop sandwiches, live entertainment, face painting, kids’ games, a cake walk and a pie sale. All of the items for the cake walk and pie sale were donated by community members - homemade delicious!! In October, the village of Lyndon used our facility as the registration site for their Fall Scenic Ride. All proceeds were then graciously donated to the historical society. The museum was open for tricking or treating on Halloween. 40 charming characters and ghoulish goblins visited that night. On November 12th, Fran Riley from KWQC TV 6 of the Quad-Cities visited Lyndon. Several life-long residents were interviewed. The facility was showcased on **KWQC TV 6 – Fran Riley Feature**. Our segment can yet be viewed at: <http://kwqc.com/2015/11/13/bridging-the-past-to-the-present>. The video is excellent and will provide you an exceptional view of our facility. Make sure you scroll down to view an impressive photo gallery as well. On November 14th we hosted our ever-popular 5th annual fall trivia night. Community members and businesses donated items for our drawings and door prizes. Board members prepared a variety of snacks. On December 6th, Santa visited the historical society arriving on a Lyndon Fire Department Truck. Board members, Alicia Wetzell and Kodi Wright, transformed the fellowship hall into a glitter-filled Santa’s workshop. Snowmen to reindeers to decorated Christmas bags were created by our 50 little visitors as they munched on Christmas cookies and sipped fruit juice.

A Special Thank You

We are so very grateful to all who have so generously given to the Lyndon Area Historical Society. To those who have made monetary donations – thank you. To those Lyndon residents who have donated their time and efforts – thank you. To those businesses who have donated items for our fundraisers – thank you. To the Prophetstown High School Leo and Art Clubs – thank you. To Rod Copeland, for his legal expertise – thank you. To Tony Winstead, our web designer - thank you. To the Lyndon Village Board and Public Works Department – thank you. To the Lyndon Fire Department – thank you.

2016 Events

Visit us in 2016. We will again be providing the Bounce House for the Wright Family Easter Egg Hunt in March. Spring and fall trivia nights are also on the list. Look for those to be held in April and again in November. We are considering hosting a “Christmas in July” featuring the sale of holiday collectibles. A 3rd annual Bridge Bash is on the roster for late September. This year, we will be adding another feature, an old-fashioned ice cream social. We will be open on Halloween. December 2016 will mark the 30th anniversary of the last service held at the Lyndon Congregational Church. We are considering hosting a special program. A visit from Santa and Santa’s Workshop are a definite “go” for 2016. All events are subject to changes/adjustments as needed. For updates check our website or Facebook.

Exhibits

Current exhibit showcase Dr. Aaron Holt, Bud Gibson, and the Lyndon Bridge. Another pays tribute to Lyndon's founders and the Lyndon Congregational Church. During these colder days, Lois Pilgrim and other board members have been working on a new exhibit titled – *Lyndon's Famous, Infamous, and Colorful Characters*.

Usage of the Facility

Both the chapel and downstairs fellowship hall may be reserved for private events and celebrations. Visit our website for a copy of the Facility Usage Agreement.

Memorabilia

Mouse pads, coasters, beverage insulators, refrigerator magnets, note cards, T-shirts, Whiteside County History Books...these are just a few of the many items available for purchase. A number of these items are also available at the Lyndon Village Hall. Contact Alicia Wetzell (815-499-1813) or Lindy Greenwood (815-499-3840) for further information.

Media and Marketing - www.lyndonareahistoricalsociety.org

You can contact us through our website or email us at lyndonareahistoricalsociety@yahoo.com. The website has a photo gallery, calendar, history, facility usage, genealogy research, Lyndon Bridge chronology, past issues of our newsletters, and a membership form. Call Mary Ellen (Hunt) Rogers (815-778-4962) or Kris Bielema (815-499-4015). We are on Facebook. We are generally showcased in the following: The Echo, The Whiteside Sentinel, The Erie Review, and The Fulton Journal. Look for us in the 2016 Northwest Illinois Visitor Guide.

Board Meetings/Hours

We meet the last Wednesday of the month at 6:00 pm at 405 4th St. West. All board meetings are open to the public. (No regularly scheduled meetings December - February). Generally, we are open every Wednesday from 1:00 – 3:00 pm. If you wish to visit the facility at another time, contact Kris Bielema (815-499-4015). We are always in need of volunteers. Please consider some of the options listed on the membership form below.

Sincerely,

Carol (Richmond) Crady – president; Alicia (Attig) Wetzell – vice president; Mary Ellen (Hunt) Rogers – treasurer; Kris Burke-Bielema – secretary Board Members: Bart Bielema, Jim and Connie Boonstra, Dale Ann and Terry Cook, Lindy Greenwood, Neil Johnson, Brady Nance (youth member), Kodi Wright

Lyndon Area Historical Society Membership Form

Return this portion with your membership dues/donation/memorials.

To make a monetary donation and/or to become a member, please mark the appropriate area and mail your check to our address: Lyndon Area Historical Society PO Box 112 Lyndon, IL 61261 Check Payable: Lyndon Area Historical Society

_____ **Single Membership (\$10.00)** _____ **Family Membership (\$20.00)**
_____ **Monetary Donation/Memorial (Please specify the intent of donation/memorial in the space provided below).**

Name _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Please check if you are interested in:

- Board or committee member
- Help maintain visitor hours
- Catalog and archive
- Media/Technology
- Help with small maintenance tasks such as _____
- Other _____

**Lyndon Area Historical Society
PO Box 112 - 405 W. 4th Street
Lyndon, IL 61261**

**Local Postal Patron
Lyndon, IL 61261**