

1847

1997

**WISCONSIN**

150 Years of Dutch-American Tradition

LEE STERNARD

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CEDAR GROVE, WISCONSIN

1997

150 Years of Dutch-American Tradition

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# CEDAR GROVE WISCONSIN

150 Years of Dutch-American Tradition

**Cedar Grove, Wisconsin**  
**150 Years of Dutch-American Tradition**

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Special thanks to Richard A. Dykstra for his boundless devotion to this book project. His dedication, commitment and hard work have resulted in a wonderful sesquicentennial gift to this community now and for years to come. For his contribution of innumerable hours spent researching, writing, verifying, and editing, Rich deserves our heartfelt appreciation.

With sincere gratitude,  
Cedar Grove Sesquicentennial Committee

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## - Chapter One -

### Introduction

By Richard Dykstra

**A**fter 150 years the strong Dutch heritage of this small Wisconsin community is still very evident. Past and present business names include DeZwaan Restaurant, Dutch Crust Bakery, Windmill Gardens, DeSmidt's Winkel van de Achterhoek, and the Dutch Cleaners. The village also has DeVisch Windmill, Het Museum, the Holland Guild Gezelschap, and an annual Holland Festival during which area residents display their Dutch pride to visitors from throughout the country.

While increased mobility and ease of travel have had a significant impact on the village, one need only page through a local telephone book to appreciate the strong Dutch influence that still exists. Names like Bruggink, Hilbelink, Huenink, Mentink, Prinsen, DeMaster, DeRuyter, and Voskuil still dominate the listings.

A great deal of information has been written about the Village of Cedar Grove since its founding in 1847, but most of those writings are in report form and highlight only specific historical subjects. Until now that information has been scattered throughout local libraries, the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center, and a variety of private collections. The purpose of this text is to provide a single definitive source for people to learn more about the history of the Village of Cedar Grove.

The concept for this project came out of a committee formed to help celebrate the Village of Cedar Grove's 150th anniversary in 1997. That committee, which was established to generate ideas for the sesquicentennial celebration, consisted of Village President Erwin Claussen, Holland Guild representative Leona Theune, and community representatives Laverne Lemmenes, Dan Molter, Jane Herzog, Bev Sohre, Pat Premo, Joan Lenz,



## *Chapter 1*

Lillian Wissink, Richard Dykstra, Carolyn Heinen, Larry Lenz, Winson Graven, Judy Risseuw, Karen Eernisse, and Bev Garside.

Most readers are probably familiar with the old saying "If you want something done, ask someone busy to do it." Well, that is exactly what was done to get this book finished in a timely manner. We asked busy teachers, busy factory workers, busy housewives, busy librarians, busy entrepreneurs, and busy retired people to assist in the research and writing of the book. The response from these people was typical of the response from area residents whenever assistance has been needed on community projects. Virtually without exception people agreed to help immediately. Those who felt they could not complete the task by themselves helped find someone who could. Pat Premo, librarian for the Cedar Grove-Belgium Area School District, graciously agreed to assist as co-editor for the project.

In suggesting this book as a possible sesquicentennial project, I quite truthfully did not envision the project becoming as involved as it has. It simply seemed that this was an appropriate time to have all of the information that has been written about the Village of Cedar Grove compiled into a single source. Originally the book was intended to have one main chapter devoted to the general history of the village with a few lesser chapters covering specific topics in more detail. It soon became obvious, however, that the few lesser chapters would turn into much more, and what was to have been a 150 page book turned into a much larger reference. In total, an estimated 1,200 hours of research, writing, and editing have been dedicated to this project by dozens of volunteers who truly care about the past, present, and future of this community.

As a teen I cared very little about the history of the community I lived in or about the past in general. I was far more interested in playing sports, getting my driver's license, buying a car, and meeting my friends at Smitty's Sweet Shop. There we could play the pinball machine, talk about the next week's activities, and sit around making fun of just about everything. In school, I was quite good at math and science but cared very little about history. I can still remember sitting in my history classes daydreaming about everything but the subject being taught.

But something has changed over the years, and I now have a much greater appreciation of the past and for those who con-

tributed so much to our heritage. It is difficult to conceive what our ancestors went through to establish the communities we now live in. While some immigrants were relatively wealthy, many more were not. The poorer immigrants traveled in the cargo holds of ships as they crossed the Atlantic Ocean and arrived in this area with little more than the clothes on their backs. Many of the immigrants were lured here by promises of wealth and luxury from friends or family members who had made the trek earlier. In actuality those promises were made by lonely, scared settlers who simply wanted someone to commiserate with. Though lonely and afraid, these people did not give up. They worked hard, relying on their faith in God, as they struggled to survive. With a work ethic that is envied to this day, they built communities such as Cedar Grove. For those bold pioneers we should be eternally grateful.

Perhaps the suggestion for this project and the countless hours devoted to it are a form of penance for my paying so little attention to history in the past. And perhaps the reason I now have a greater appreciation of the past is that I am finally beginning to understand the impact that our ancestors have had on the world we live in today. Whatever the reason, the past now means much more to me, and it has been a pleasure and a privilege to play a part in documenting and preserving the history of our community for generations to come.

At one point, shortly after this history project began, the editors considered rewriting chapters as they were submitted in an effort to provide a common style and format for the book. This plan was quickly abandoned, however, for two main reasons. First, it became obvious very quickly that the project time frame simply would not allow significant rewriting to be done. The entire project, from concept to printing, had to be completed in less than five months. Since the contributing authors were given approximately two months to research and write their individual chapters, there would be very little time for the book's editors to do a significant amount of rewriting after the chapters were submitted. Secondly, and possibly more importantly, the editors felt that in doing any significant rewriting something might be lost in the translation. While each chapter has been edited, efforts have been made to maintain each author's individual style. The one exception to this rule involves chapters where so much informa-

tion was provided that some degree of rewriting was necessary to provide proper continuity of the edited material.

Contributing authors have made every effort to be as accurate as possible in summarizing the historical data presented in this book. Readers must realize, however, that some of the information in this book could only be obtained through interviews and conversations with individuals having knowledge of the subjects being discussed. Information obtained in this manner can only be as accurate as the recollections of those providing it.

The authors have also tried to be as informative as possible in presenting the history of our village. It is virtually impossible, however, to say everything about every subject in the space allowed and to make everyone who reads this book think that their particular business or family history has received adequate attention. Thus, the editors ask your understanding as you read this text. This may be particularly true as you read the chapters relating to village business and industry where a large turnover in business over the village's 150-year history has made it virtually impossible to cover every business enterprise that existed over the years. As readers will find, those chapters are devoted primarily to full-time business establishments that advertise, as well as to some additional businesses with unique historical significance. Obviously, for a book of this nature, more attention will be given to businesses and business locations with established histories and storied pasts.

As will be seen, input for this reference has been provided by a large number of contributing authors with a wealth of knowledge about the Village of Cedar Grove. The editors gratefully acknowledge the willingness of these authors to donate their time and talents to this project. We hope that those reading this text will appreciate the efforts put forth by these individuals as well. We also hope that readers will gain a greater understanding of the roles that area church, business, and civic leaders have played over the years in paving the way for continued progress while maintaining and nurturing a profound appreciation of the past.

## - Chapter Two -

# Amsterdam, Wisconsin

By Richard Dykstra

The relationship between the Village of Amsterdam along Lake Michigan's shore and the Village of Cedar Grove approximately one mile inland has been a topic of conversation for many generations. Unfortunately, as stories relating to these two villages have been passed down from generation to generation it has become somewhat difficult to differentiate fact from fiction. The purpose of this chapter is to help clarify the relationship between the two villages and to dispel some of the myths and misconceptions that have been perpetuated over the years. Some of the most common misconceptions regarding the two villages include the following.

1. One common misconception regarding the two villages is the suggestion that the Village of Amsterdam became the Village of Cedar Grove. This concept was presented in a local newspaper article as recently as 1988. An article in the July 3, 1988, edition of the *Sheboygan Press* stated:

*Cedar Grove was not always Cedar Grove. The first name of the village was actually Amsterdam, and the village was not even in today's location. Amsterdam stood east of today's Cedar Grove along the Lake Michigan shoreline in the 1840s.*

Background information for the subject newspaper article was probably obtained from Cedar Grove area residents who thought they were providing accurate data or from previously published writings about the Village of Amsterdam. Unfortunately there have been so many myths and misconceptions about Amsterdam

## *Chapter 2*

communicated over the years that either source of information was likely to be flawed.

In actuality the Villages of Cedar Grove and Amsterdam were always separate entities and the two villages coexisted for many years.

2. One of the most frequently repeated misconceptions relating to the Villages of Amsterdam and Cedar Grove is the suggestion that Amsterdam was founded prior to Cedar Grove.

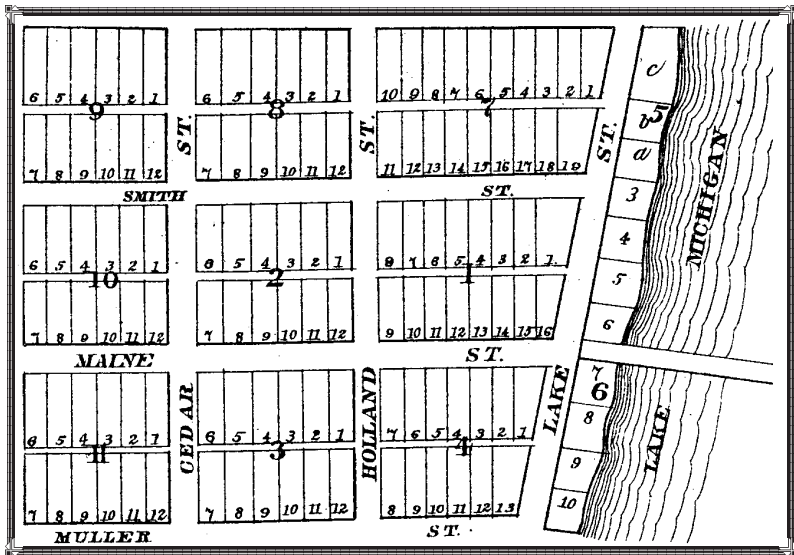
The Village of Cedar Grove was founded in 1847 by Rev. Pieter Zonne. The land that became the Village of Amsterdam was purchased by Gilbert H. Smith in 1850 and was platted as a village in 1852. The year 1852 appears to be recognized as Amsterdam's founding date since the 75th anniversary of its founding was celebrated in 1927.

Gilbert Smith operated a small fishery along Lake Michigan's shore for two years before he purchased the land that became Amsterdam. And while there may have been a few other settlers in the area by that time, there is no evidence to support the suggestion that a formal community existed along the lake shore prior to the time Cedar Grove was founded in 1847.

3. Another common misconception is the suggestion that the Village of Amsterdam was founded by the Dutch.

The land that became the Village of Amsterdam was purchased and platted by Gilbert H. Smith, a Yankee who moved to Wisconsin from the Lake Ontario region of upper New York State in approximately 1847. According to Smith family history, Gilbert Smith and his father William lived in the Port Washington area of Wisconsin Territory very briefly and then set up a small fishery near Cedar Grove in 1848. When William Smith passed away that same year, he left the fishery to Gilbert. In 1850, when Gilbert was just twenty-three years old, he purchased the land that became the Village of Amsterdam.

According to documents available at the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office, the official plat of the Village of Amsterdam was signed by Gilbert H. Smith and was submitted to Sheboygan County officials on May 15, 1852. The same



Original Plat of the Village of Amsterdam  
(Photo Courtesy Cedar Grove Public Library)

document was received for record in the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office on September 8, 1852. This original village plat appears to be the first official record of the name Amsterdam being used for the settlement.

While there were many Dutch immigrants living in and around Amsterdam, it appears that many people of other ancestry lived there as well. Several written accounts refer to the fact that former Ohioans settled in the area both before and after the village was platted. The Ohioans, who presumably were not of Dutch descent, moved to this area after fishing became unprofitable in their own Lake Erie. Some written accounts suggest that the Ohioans fished here during the summer months and then returned home at the onset of winter. Other accounts suggest that the former Ohioans maintained residence here, working as fishermen during the summer months and as hunters and trappers during the winter.

While the Village of Amsterdam was not founded by the Dutch, there is some indication that it may have been named by a Dutch immigrant. Several writings indicate that a Walvoord, either Gerret or his father Hendrik, may have been instrumental in naming the village. This contention is based primarily on

## Chapter 2

Walvoord family histories that were drafted well after Amsterdam was established. The first reference to the naming of Amsterdam from a source other than Walvoord family histories was found in a 1927 *Sheboygan Press* article about a celebration marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of Amsterdam. That August 29, 1927, article states:

*Dr. Sweemer, in his extemporaneous address, told of the time when he was a boy and lived in Amsterdam. He said that, as far as he knew, there was no definite reason for naming the settlement but that it was generally conceded that Henry [Hendrik] Walvoord had been responsible for the name and that he wished to give it a name which made the settlement appear as if the Hollanders settling there had been mainly responsible for the founding of the village.*

It is not known in what vein the latter portion of the above statement was made or whether the statement, if intended to be factual, was totally true. Two more likely reasons for the village's name are the fact that the lowlands along Lake Michigan reminded the Walvoords and other Dutch settlers of their native land, and the fact that the new village was located in Holland Township.

Hendrik Walvoord, who purchased shares in the Holland Trading Company shortly after moving to the Town of Holland in late 1849, appears to have been a rather influential businessman in this area during the mid-1800s. In Amsterdam the Walvoords engaged in merchandising and in the sale and transportation of cordwood from the Amsterdam pier. The pier, which according to the original plat of the Village of Amsterdam was "one thousand feet in length," allowed ships of significant size to dock there. Various written accounts alternately give credit to the Walvoords and the Smiths for construction of the pier in approximately 1851. In all likelihood both families probably had something to do with construction of the pier since it was a necessity for both the Walvoords' and the Smiths' business interests.

4. One additional misconception is the suggestion that Gilbert Smith purchased the land that became Amsterdam from the United States Government.

In actuality Gilbert Smith was not the first or even the second owner of the land that became the Village of Amsterdam. According to documents in the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office, the land was originally acquired from the U.S. Government by Charles and Carlton Wheelock of Brown County, Wisconsin Territory, in the late 1830s. While Town of Holland Abstracts indicate that the transaction took place in 1836, the official U.S. Government document describing the land transfer was not signed until 1839, and the transaction was not recorded in the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office until November of 1850. The reason for the lengthy delay between transaction and recording dates may have something to do with the fact that the document describing the transaction had to be signed in Washington, D.C. It is also possible that the signed document was then filed with Wisconsin's Territorial Headquarters in Green Bay rather than with the newly organized Sheboygan County. Apparently it was a common practice to file such documents at territorial headquarters prior to Wisconsin becoming a state in 1848.

In 1847 Charles Wheelock, whose residence was then listed more specifically as Green Bay, sold the land to Elisha Morrow of Brown County. The document describing this transaction was signed in Brown County, Wisconsin Territory, on October 21, 1847, and was recorded in the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office on August 12, 1848.

Gilbert H. Smith purchased the land from Elisha Morrow and his wife Maria in October of 1850. The document relating to this transaction was signed in Brown County, Wisconsin, on October 5, 1850, and was recorded in the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office on November 14, 1850.

Gilbert H. Smith, whose sons went on to found the Smith Brothers Fish Co. in Port Washington, eventually owned much more land than that which became the Village of Amsterdam. While it is possible that some of that other land was acquired directly from the U.S. Government, the land that became the Village of Amsterdam was not. Although much of the land Gilbert Smith owned in the Town of Holland was acquired from individuals rather than from the U.S. Government it is still possi-



ble that he did, as legend has it, walk to Green Bay to initiate, process or record some of his land transactions.

5. One last misconception regarding the Villages of Amsterdam and Cedar Grove is the suggestion that the once thriving Village of Amsterdam ceased to exist immediately after the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railroad was completed through Cedar Grove.

While there is a consensus that Amsterdam was once a thriving community, the village's degree of economic success is somewhat more difficult to discern. In reviewing hundreds of pages of material both at the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center and the Cedar Grove Public Library, no thoroughly documented information could be found regarding the number of businesses located in Amsterdam during its peak economic times. One oft-repeated statement regarding the Village of Amsterdam suggests that at one time the village had "four stores, three saloons, a blacksmith shop, and a barrel factory." This basic statement has been found in numerous books and newspaper articles published over a relatively wide time frame without any indication as to the original source of the statement. The earliest mention of the oft-repeated phrase, as found at the Historical Research Center, was in an August 29, 1927, *Sheboygan Press* article about the 75th anniversary of the founding of Amsterdam. That article referred to remarks made by then 74-year-old Dr. William Sweemer who lived in Amsterdam as a child, and stated:

*Dr. Sweemer also told of the business places of the village, the four stores, including the "department" store of Van Tilberg, Walvoord, Stokdyke and Hoyt, the three saloons and the blacksmith shop and the rough factory where the old fashioned hogshead barrels were made.*

This newspaper article excerpt appears to have become the basis of information for many future writings about the Village of Amsterdam, but the information is based on recollections from sixty to seventy years before the quotation was made. A more conservative estimate of Amsterdam's peak economic times was

also found at the Historical Research Center. The more modest estimate was included in a February 10, 1900, Cedar Grove Business Directory that was published by the *Sheboygan Herald*. That publication, which included historical perspectives of both Cedar Grove and Amsterdam, stated:

*In her thriving period here could be found two stores, blacksmith shop, saloon and coopershop that employed ten to twelve men, which then was considered quite [a] concern.*

Regardless which estimate of Amsterdam's peak economy is correct, the village's economic boom was short-lived. By 1872, when the first steam locomotive reached Cedar Grove, Amsterdam was already suffering from shortages of cordwood and lumber for shipment from its pier, and commercial fishing was not as prosperous as it once had been. The advent of rail travel through Cedar Grove also reduced the need for much of the lake shipping that had played such a significant role in Amsterdam's economy. As a result of these adverse economic conditions, many Amsterdam residents moved into Cedar Grove at about that time. Some of these people even placed their homes on skids and brought them along as they traveled with teams of oxen. An August 12, 1947, *Sheboygan Press* article, which was based on the recollections of a former Cedar Grove area resident, suggests that Amsterdam was totally abandoned soon after the railroad passed through Cedar Grove. But the stories in that article, though very well told, are derived primarily from reminiscences and recollections rather than from documented fact, and many of the recollections are based on second-hand information.

While some, maybe even most, of Amsterdam was abandoned after rail service reached Cedar Grove, it appears that at least a few residents stayed, and the village continued to appear on printed maps. An 1889 plat map of Amsterdam indicates that there were still ten buildings standing or occupied at that time. By 1902 that number had dwindled to just six. And while Amsterdam was no longer a thriving community after the railroad passed through Cedar Grove, it continued to appear on county and township maps into the 1900s.

In 1904 ninety of Amsterdam's originally-platted 131 building

lots were "vacated," which means the legal description of the individual lots ceased to exist and the lots reverted to a single, larger parcel of land. Sometime between that point and 1916 the remainder of the village lots, though still platted and having individual legal descriptions, began to be shown on maps as a single, larger parcel of land. By that time the land's ownership had been transferred several times. The property was sold by Gilbert Smith's widow Minerva to William H. Timlin and his wife Celia in 1899. Timlin, who became a State of Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice in 1907, sold the land to Ernest Smith in 1910, and Smith resold the property to Charles Olson and his wife Carrie just months later. A 1916 Town of Holland plat map shows Charles Olson as owner of the property that was once known as Amsterdam and no longer shows Amsterdam as a separate entity on the map.

Several additional lots of the original plat of Amsterdam were replatted as part of Longfield Shores subdivision along Lake Michigan in 1948. According to the Sheboygan County Register of Deeds office it appears that lots that were not vacated or replatted over the years have retained the legal descriptions that were assigned to them during the original platting in 1852. This may explain why Amsterdam began to reappear on some Town of Holland plat maps after some time. A 1941 Sheboygan County Atlas shows the "Village of Amsterdam" as a platted parcel in the Town of Holland. And a 1992 Sheboygan County Atlas and Plat Book still shows "Amsterdam Plat" as a separate entity along the south edge of Longfield Shores in the township.

In much the same way that Amsterdam retained its name long after its economy faded and its population declined, the enterprise that helped establish the community endured for a time as well. And although commercial fishing was no longer the booming industry it had been during the 1850s and 1860s, it did continue along Amsterdam's shores through the first half of the twentieth century. The last commercial fishermen to operate a business there were Dan G. Smies and Jim Wieskamp. These two men operated the Amsterdam Fish Co. until the late 1940s. At that point the business was purchased by Dan G. Smies, Abram Smies, and Jannes Smies with Dan G. Smies having controlling interest. Following that purchase, most of the nets and equipment



Amsterdam Pier, Fish Shanty, and Ice House During the Late 1940s  
(Photo Courtesy Wayne Voskuil)

that had been used at Amsterdam, as well as the pier (which was no longer the original Amsterdam pier), were moved to the operations of D. Smies Sons' fishery at the end of the present Smies Road. Approximately one decade later rising lake waters and crashing waves brought down the fish shanty that had once been the hub of activity in the Village of Amsterdam. By then there was virtually no commercial fishing activity in the Town of Holland, and most lake shore property was privately owned land dotted with summer cottages.

By the late 1960s, plans were being formulated to convert portions of the land at Amsterdam into a public park. Eventually the Town of Holland, Village of Cedar Grove, and Village of Oostburg obtained land for the park through trade, donation, and purchase of the properties involved. The three municipalities then set up a park commission to oversee operation of the public lands. The facility, appropriately named Amsterdam Park, includes a sand beach, boat launch, and shelter. On warm, summer days the Amsterdam area is once again buzzing, with one of the most popular activities being sport fishing.

Sport fishing, which has replaced commercial fishing as an activity along Amsterdam's shore, has been bolstered in recent

years by the stocking of Lake Michigan with lake trout and Chinook and coho salmon. The enhancement of sport fishing was actually the last of a chain of events that began in the 1950s when lamprey began to invade the waters of Lake Michigan in large numbers. The lamprey, a destructive eel-like fish that presumably reached the Great Lakes through the St. Lawrence Seaway, decimated the lake's population of lake trout, perch, and other large fish that fed on the much smaller alewife. When the population of large fish declined, the alewife population increased dramatically. The overpopulated alewives frequently washed ashore creating a less than desirable sight and smell. Officials first controlled the lamprey problem with various management techniques and then began stocking Lake Michigan with lake trout and salmon to help limit the alewife population. This approach reduced the alewife problem significantly and greatly enhanced sport fishing in the area as well.

So it is fishing that once again draws people to the shores of Lake Michigan much as it first attracted Gilbert Smith to the area in the mid-1800s. And although the fishing is now of a somewhat different nature, it has helped revive the shores of Amsterdam.

## - Chapter Three - General History

By Joan Lenz and David Heuver

### **Immigration and Early Settlement**

**T**he people of the Kingdom of the Netherlands were enduring difficult times in the 1840s. The population was expanding but the land was not. This led to overcrowding and fewer opportunities for the nation's youth. Young men wondered how they would support their families and how they could provide even the most basic needs for their children. Conditions were unsettled at the very least. For many families food was scarce, the guilder was even more scarce, and there was an uneasiness regarding religion. The Reformed Church of the Netherlands had been reorganized in the early 1800s, introducing a new, more liberal doctrine that was not accepted by all. This controversy became an important issue among many pious Dutch Protestants.

By the 1840s economic conditions within the Netherlands had been somewhat depressed for nearly thirty years. The industrial revolution which had been so successful in parts of Europe was less successful in the Netherlands. Trading centers like London and Hamburg began to overshadow Amsterdam, and high taxes plagued the Dutch people. Compounding all of this was the devastating potato blight of the mid-1840s. When this inexpensive mainstay of the Dutch people disappeared from their tables, it led to widespread hunger among the working class and agricultural families. A combination of social, economic, and religious conditions, including the issue of basic survival, led to a decision by many Hollanders to seek their fortune elsewhere. America, the spacious land of milk and honey, awaited them.

Imagine the emotional family meetings that must have

occurred as many Hollanders chose to leave their native land. In some instances entire families left together, while in others a single family member was sent ahead, anticipating that other family members would follow. Often, aged parents and grandparents were left behind. Family members surely had to face the fact that they would never meet again on this earth. In preparing for travel, many possessions had to be sold or given away since only a limited amount of clothing, a few essentials, and non-perishable foods could be taken on the voyage. This difficult decision meant material and emotional separation. Emotions must certainly have run the gamut from heartbreak to eager anticipation as family members left for the adventure of the new world.

The first leg of the journey, crossing the Atlantic Ocean, typically lasted over thirty days according to most written accounts. For all but the wealthy this leg of the journey was made aboard a crowded, dirty, possibly even lice-infested or rodent-infested ship. The immigrants knew that the journey was perilous and knew that terrible storms awaited them on the Atlantic Ocean. They also knew they would be facing sea-sickness, hunger and illness as they traveled but continued just the same. Upon arrival in New York, the immigrants went through customs, interviews, and brief health screenings. A health problem or disability could mean another temporary family separation, but then finally, thankfully, the Hollanders were on their own.

The Dutch immigrants who were headed to southeastern Wisconsin often traveled by boat to Albany, then took a train to Buffalo, a boat through the Great Lakes to Sheboygan or Milwaukee and then traveled overland to their new "home." From 1845 to 1848, Hollanders arrived quite regularly in southeastern Wisconsin.

While written accounts vary somewhat regarding the first Dutch settlers in Sheboygan County, it appears to be fairly well accepted that Jan Zeeveld and his father Lawrence, Jacob Smidt (DeSmidt), and Teunis DeVos arrived sometime in 1845 with Gerrit Kolste (TeKolste) arriving in late 1845 or early 1846. Other families who reportedly arrived in the area by 1846 include those with last names of VandenDriest, Caljou, DeLyzer, Vrijheid, VerDuine, and Voskuil.

These early settlers had heard of a fertile area of old-growth

forest abundant with wildlife. The location was in a prime spot located along an important trade route on the Green Bay Road and Sauk Trail. The area was near Lake Michigan and was also along a mail route. The land was inexpensive at eight to twelve dollars an acre for usable farm land and just \$1.25 an acre for timber land.

Gerrit (Gert Hendrik) Kolste, who was from Aalten in the Netherlands, purchased the land that became the Village of Cedar Grove from the United States Government in 1846. Mr. Kolste was instrumental in the settlement of Cedar Grove as revealed in the following recollections of a young woman whose family immigrated to the United States sometime later:

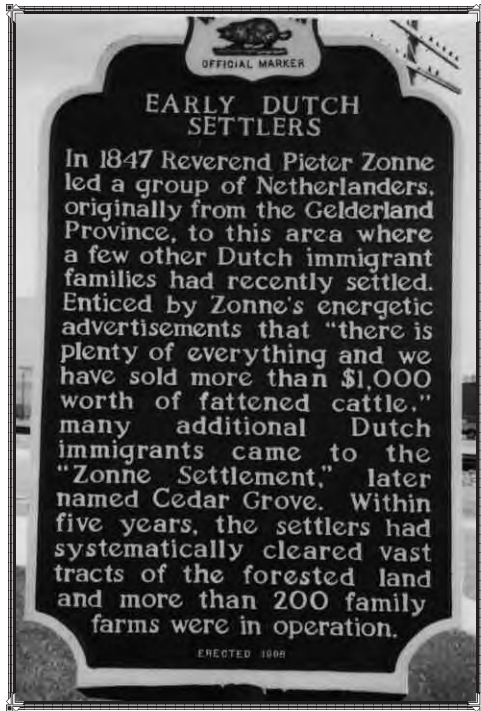
*Grandma was 8 years old and had a vivid recollection of the events . . . coming home (in Gelderland) in the spring of 1847 and finding her father, brothers and neighbors reading a letter from G.H. Kolste. . . . He had bought land and built a home . . . reporting the land could be had for practically nothing; where deer were so plentiful that fresh meat was always to be had; where plums could be picked from the window and the finest sugar oozed out of trees. He advised his friends in Gelderland to come to America and settle in Sheboygan County.*

It is no coincidence that Holland and Zeeland, Michigan; Pella, Iowa; and Cedar Grove, Wisconsin are all celebrating their sesquicentennials in 1997. In early 1847 three separate parties, each under the direction of a prominent Dutch minister, left the Netherlands to establish settlements in the new world. The three ministers, who had reportedly studied together in the Netherlands, all settled in the midwest but in distinctly different areas of the midwest. One group, led by Rev. R.C. VanRaalte, settled in Western Michigan while a second group, led by Rev. H.P. Scholte, settled in southern Iowa. The third group, which was led by Rev. Pieter Zonne, settled in the Cedar Grove area.

Various written accounts suggest that those arriving in this area in 1847 include family names such as DeSmidt, Walvoord, Daane, Ketman, Voskuil, Wissink, Eernisse, Stokdyk, and Sprangers. It is not known which of these early settlers may have been a part of the Rev. Pieter Zonne contingent.

The Reverend Zonne, who is generally credited with founding





Historical Marker Located Next to DeVisch Windmill  
on South Main Street in Cedar Grove  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

the Village of Cedar Grove, was born in Vlaardingen, the Netherlands, in 1807. Before becoming a leader in the Dutch Reformed Church, he was a sail maker in Delft. Reverend Zonne stayed in Milwaukee very briefly after reaching the United States, ministering to the Dutch people there. He then led a group of followers to this broad area of fertile clay soil covered with hardwood forests in southeastern Sheboygan County. When the Zonne contingent arrived in this area, the land was still inhabited by friendly Sauk Indians and was teeming with wildlife. The Sauk Indians had relinquished their land to the U.S. Government in 1833 and had been given three years to move out. Many of the Native Americans believed that the land was a sacred possession, though, and stayed in the area until approximately 1870.

Upon arrival in this area, the first necessity was a log cabin. This had to be completed before winter set in. Trees were felled

and cabins raised. One early settler in the Town of Holland, Pieter Daane, wrote:

*...the early settler cleared off sufficient ground, cut the logs into proper lengths and hauled them with a yoke of oxen to the spot designated for the house. Then they had a bee with what neighbors they could get together, to help them "log up" or raise their house or shanty, as they were called. The house was logged up to a proper height, always taking care to have the back part about 1 1/2 feet lower than the front. The roof consisted of basswood troughs, or trees split in two and hollowed out. These were laid on the top of the shanty, side by side, the hollow side up, and over the opening one was laid with the hollow down to shed the rain. In the front an opening was cut for a door, and next to the door a place was cut for an 8 by 10 six-light window. Very many had nothing but a ground floor, stools sawed from logs were the only seats, a chest answered for a table. Such were the homes of the early settlers.*

Land was quickly cleared to raise crops of grain, corn, hay, and vegetables. Except for occasional income from cleared timber or the sale of a crop, the early Dutch settlers survived primarily by living off all that this fertile land provided.

There is a great admiration for and interest in the lives of the early pioneers. Every story carries its own joys and sorrows. The most heartbreaking story of this area's early settlement has to be that of the propeller ship the *Phoenix*. The *Phoenix*, which had left Buffalo, New York, on November 11, 1847, was bound for southeastern Wisconsin with approximately 175 Dutch immigrants as well as an unknown number of other passengers and a cargo of coffee, sugar, molasses, and hardware. The Dutch immigrants aboard the vessel had begun their journey from Rotterdam in September of 1847 aboard the ocean vessel *The France*.

Lake Michigan was rocked by a violent storm on November 20, so the *Phoenix* docked in Manitowoc to refuel and wait for the storm to subside. When lake waters calmed somewhat, the *Phoenix* resumed its travel southward, parallel to the Lake Michigan shoreline. At about 4:00 a.m. on November 21, 1847, passengers awoke to frantic cries of "Fire! Fire!" The ship's pas-

sengers and crew battled the flames for a while, but the blaze was out of control. Sadly, there were only two lifeboats aboard the *Phoenix*. The scene is almost too awful to imagine.

There sat the *Phoenix* ablaze on the icy waters of Lake Michigan, just five miles off Sheboygan's shore. Horrified citizens could see the fire clearly, but there was little that they could do to help. Eventually the two small lifeboats reached shore. One of the lifeboats immediately returned to the *Phoenix* in hopes of rescuing others. The *Delaware*, a ship that was anchored at a Sheboygan pier, also left port to help the foundering *Phoenix*, but it was too late. Only three additional survivors could be rescued from the lake's icy waters. The *Delaware* towed the smoldering hulk of the *Phoenix* to shallow waters off Sheboygan's north pier where it soon sank.

A bonfire was quickly built on shore to warm the cold, wet, and grieving survivors. Only forty-six people were warmed by those friendly flames. At dawn the ragged group traveled into Sheboygan where they were taken into homes and cared for until they could put their lives back together. That sometimes meant weeks, even months of kind, tender-hearted care.

Touching stories of sacrifice and bravery have been told by those who survived the *Phoenix* disaster. Passengers tossed anything they could into the water when the lifeboats were filled, anything that would float. The water was bitterly cold and hands numbed, grips were lost and courageous men, women, and children perished. Families were forever separated when young girls were put into lifeboats while their parents and brothers faced their doom. A successful young Wisconsin businessman, David Blish from Southport (now Kenosha), was by all accounts an angel of mercy giving the ultimate sacrifice, his own life, while helping save the lives of his new Dutch friends. Two young girls, the Hazleton sisters, who were returning to Sheboygan from their boarding school in Ohio, were seen embracing as they jumped to their death within sight of their home. Two other children were literally thrown into lifeboats to save their lives.

Some of the forty-three survivors aboard the two small lifeboats are said to have bailed water from the boats with wooden shoes. On one of the lifeboats, passengers are said to have rowed with a broom for lack of an oar. The survivors watched in

horror as the *Phoenix* burned to the waterline and took with it over 200 lives. Of the approximately 175 Dutch immigrants aboard, only twenty-five survived. The known Dutch survivors include Hendrik Esselinkpas; Berendina Willink; Hendrik Wilterdink; Willemina TenDolle; Jan, Johanna and Harmina Oonk; Hiram Ruselink; Derk Voskuil; Gerritje Oberink; Mr. and Mrs. Teunis Schuppert and Dena; Hendrika Landeweerd; Jan and Mrs. J. B. Wissink; Hanna Landeweerd; Gerrit and Mrs. Antje Geerlings and their children Henry, Jacob, Altje, Gerritje, and baby Alberta who died very soon after.

The exact cause of the fire aboard the *Phoenix* has never been determined. Some survivors believed that the fire was caused by a careless, drunken crew that left water pumps unattended, thus allowing boilers to run dry, overheat, and ignite surrounding wood. Witnesses reported that water was flowing on the decks shortly before the fire began. Was the water pumped onto the deck instead of into the boilers? Or was this truly an accident, caused by a burst pipe or some other flaw? There is no way of knowing the exact cause of the blaze or where the fire began. Many survivors, quite understandably, preferred not to talk about the disaster. Some moved on to settle elsewhere, while others started new lives right here in the Cedar Grove area and put down new "roots" in our fertile soil.

While the early history of the Village of Cedar Grove is very interesting, land adjoining the village has a very interesting history of its own. Various written accounts suggest that at some point while this area was being surveyed in the early 1830s, a small natural salt lick was discovered. Since salt was considered a very important commodity at that time, being used both to attract wildlife and for the preservation of food items, the value of land with salt on it was significantly higher. With word of the natural salt lick out, developers supposedly purchased nearby land with the hopes of making a fortune from this find. The developers' interest, which stretched from just east of the present village limits to the shores of Lake Michigan, was called Salina, and is clearly shown on an 1836 map available at the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center. Some written accounts suggest that the developers strategically placed salt on the land to validate the natural salt lick story, thus insuring increased value

for their property. Apparently the fact that there were no real salt deposits was discovered very quickly and the land developers never made their fortune.

While Salina, the area just east of the present village limits, never did become a major settlement, the Village of Cedar Grove grew quite rapidly. One of Cedar Grove's first settlers, Sweezy Burr, lived in a typical log cabin on the south end of the village. Sweezy and his home were instrumental in the early development of Cedar Grove. Very little is known about Mr. Burr's personal life, but his name appears often in accounts of early Cedar Grove. Early settlers gathered at Mr. Burr's home to obtain provisions as well as to hear the latest news, swap stories, and pick up their mail. As legend has it, Reverend Zonne is said to have been standing in the doorway of Sweezy Burr's cabin, viewing a nearby stand of cedar trees shortly after the settlement was established. This view prompted Reverend Zonne to suggest that the new settlement be called Cedar Grove.

The little Dutch community had an auspicious beginning with plenty of good land, a harmonious group of settlers, a dominie, and very soon, its own church. Rev. Pieter Zonne began using his log cabin as Cedar Grove's first church in 1848 and performed Cedar Grove's first marriage ceremony there on November 16, 1848. On that date *Phoenix* survivors Derk Voskuil and Hendrika Landeweerd were united in holy matrimony. Reverend Zonne continued as pastor of that church until 1865. Today, three buildings later, the First Presbyterian Church still ministers to the citizens of the village. In 1853 a group of members left Reverend Zonne's church to form the Dutch Reformed Church which is now known as the First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove. This congregation was formally organized in 1856 with the Reverend VanLeeuwen as pastor.

According to several written accounts, the Village of Cedar Grove was platted by Peter Huisheere at some point during its early history. Mr. Huisheere, who was one of Cedar Grove's most prominent citizens at the time, reportedly planned and platted thirty-nine acres of a forty-acre tract. The remaining one acre was purchased by Henry [Hendrik] Walvoord to be used as a cemetery.

As soon as crude homes were finished and families were established within the young settlement, area residents' thoughts

turned to schools for their children. The first log school was built in this area in 1847.

In 1861 the Civil War began, affecting villagers just as it did the whole of our great nation. Many young men disrupted their lives, some even sacrificing them, to stand up for freedom in their adopted land. Just one year later another potential war captured the imagination of area residents. The Indians were coming! Rumors were circulating that Manitowoc had fallen and that the conflict was headed southward. In preparation for the impending conflict, weapons were gathered and guards were posted, but the Indians never arrived. Thus ended the great Indian scare of 1862. Apparently the entire incident grew out of exaggerations about a few inebriated Indians roaming the countryside.

On a much more serious note, the years 1863 and 1864 saw both great worry and great sorrow. During those years a terrible smallpox epidemic spread throughout southeastern Sheboygan County, and the Cedar Grove area was not spared. Many local residents, both young and old, succumbed to the epidemic.

In 1872 the railroad arrived in Cedar Grove, thus securing the young village a permanent place on the map. The Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railroad reached the village in November of 1872. Numerous written accounts suggest that there was a heated debate between the village's north-siders and south-siders as to where the railroad depot should be located. In actuality, it probably only mattered where the railroad tracks crossed the village's main thoroughfare, for this is where the depot was certain to be placed. This occurred somewhat nearer the south end of the original settlement, and businesses sprang up along the new railroad tracks nearly instantaneously. Quite predictably, the depot ended up being right in the center of town as development shifted to take advantage of this new mode of transportation. At about the same time railroad service reached Cedar Grove, Dutch immigration, which had declined sharply during our nation's Civil War, began to increase once again.

Twenty days of blizzards in February of 1881 buried Cedar Grove and much of southeastern Wisconsin in fifteen feet of snow. As a result, the winter of 1880-81 was dubbed the "winter of the great storm." As legend has it, roads and trails still passed over fences in April of 1881, and snow remained in gullies and

shaded areas until July of that year.

The first fifty years of Cedar Grove's existence saw the young village thrive and prosper. Those years saw the development of homes, schools, churches, and a post office. By the end of the nineteenth century, the village had its own railroad station, a physician, a newspaper, several blacksmith shops, hotels, a grist-mill, a shoemaker, a tinsmith, a feed mill, and several stores. But its pioneer days were now over and a new century dawned. Cedar Grove's twentieth-century history is covered in great detail throughout other chapters of this book.

The settling of the Cedar Grove area has been filled with human drama and emotion from the time of its first inhabitants, the proud Sauk Indians, to the persevering Hollanders. Our brave forefathers enjoyed the excitement of a new beginning as well as suffering much disappointment and tragedy. The trials and tribulations of the early Dutch settlers brought strength, stability, and determination (which outsiders see as stubbornness) to the area. These were the growing pains of a healthy community, the little Dutch Village of Cedar Grove in the heart of our new land.

### **Village Government**

Prior to 1899 all of Cedar Grove's government services were provided by the Town of Holland, Sheboygan County, and the State of Wisconsin. Then in 1899 a group of area residents petitioned to incorporate Cedar Grove, thus allowing the village to establish its own local government.

At the time incorporation proceedings were being pursued, the village had 317 residents, with ninety-one of the residents identified as eligible voters. A special meeting was held on December 19, 1899, to determine whether area residents wanted to proceed with incorporation of the village. Of eighty votes cast forty-four were in favor of incorporation with thirty-six opposed.

While the majority of voters favored incorporation, the process did not occur without conflict. According to early minutes of village board meetings, the Town of Holland contested the incorporation proceedings with legal action and tried to have the village's incorporation declared null and void. Their petition to the Wisconsin State Supreme Court was reviewed by a justice and was denied. The Town of Holland then dropped its law suit



against the newly formed Cedar Grove Village Board. The exact reason for the Town of Holland's actions throughout Cedar Grove's incorporation proceedings was not clearly defined in any available village records, but it is presumed that the township wanted to maintain its status as the sole local governing body within this area.

The first village election was held on January 16, 1900, with forty-three votes cast. When the election was over, Mr. Garret Lammers had the distinction of being the first village president. Garret Lammers was born in Aalten, the Netherlands, and immigrated to the United States in 1854. By the time Mr. Lammers was elected village president, he had been an influential businessman within the village for nearly thirty years. Mr. Lammers contracted with the railroad to provide grading for the new line as it was constructed through Cedar Grove, built and operated the first grain elevator in the village, and made several trips back to the Netherlands, bringing hundreds of new settlers with him each time he returned to this area. In later years Mr. Lammers served on the Cedar Grove State Bank's Board of Directors and participated in several other business interests as well.

In addition to the election of a village president, the January 1900 vote resulted in the election of six village trustees including William Brummels, William Meinen, J.L. Ramaker, N.F. Potts, J. VandeWall, and John Mentink. At the same time J.M. VanderVen was elected village clerk, J. Prinsen was elected village treasurer, and A. Fontaine was elected supervisor, Peter Huisheere was elected village assessor, and Herman Weavers was elected the village's street commissioner. The first village board meeting was held in an unoccupied Main Street house that was owned by the new village president Garret Lammers.

Within a relatively short time the newly formed village board realized the need for an official village hall. In April of 1903, a resolution was passed by the board to build a village hall for a sum not to exceed \$2,000. By the time the building was completed, nearly twice that amount had been spent, but the new facility included features that allowed it to serve as a community center as well as a village hall. This building, which stood just south of the present fire station along South Main Street, served the village until March of 1947 when it was badly damaged by fire.





Cedar Grove's Main Street Village Hall  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

In May of 1948, a resolution was passed to hold a special vote on the financing and construction of a new village hall not to exceed \$50,000 in cost. Following voter approval, this hall was constructed on Union Avenue west of the Cedar Grove High School on property donated by the school system. This facility was used both by village residents and the school system as a gymnasium until the early 1960s when a new gymnasium was built specifically for the high school. At that time the village hall became part of the high school and was remodeled to provide additional classrooms and a new woodworking shop for the growing school district.

Over the years the village board has met in a variety of locations ranging from an unoccupied house to a traditional village board room with a variety of other interesting locations in between. Some of the more interesting locations include a tavern

hall, the library basement, a fire department truck bay, and the village's water pump house. Of all the locations listed the village's pump house generated the most unusual operating procedures. Typically, the noise within the pump house was so great that business could not be properly conducted unless the pumps were manually shut off during the meeting. For meetings that occurred from July through September of each year, when the local canning company's demand for water was high, the pumps would be restarted periodically to assure that the water tower would not run dry. While the pumps were running, no official business was conducted.

Since 1899 eighteen different men have been elected president of the Village of Cedar Grove. Those eighteen men include Garret Lammers, A. Stokdyk, G.E. Zimmerman, G.W. Soerens, John Mentink, A.J. Schreurs, Joe Hesselink, J.C. Dees, H.E. Harmelink, H. Huenink, Dr. C.W. Meeusen, Elmer Olson, Edwin Mentink, Henry Harmelink, George Ebbbers, Harvery VanEss, David Heuver, and Erwin Claussen.

Past records from the village clerk's office have revealed several interesting and sometimes humorous occurrences that tell a lot about the people and their time. Until the late 1940s an official "Fall Clean-Up Day" was specified each year for the sole purpose of tidying up the village. And in 1904 the village board passed a motion to have a specific resident's name posted, with notices given to local saloon keepers to prohibit the sale of intoxicants to the person specified or to any member of his family. While the village still cares very much about the welfare of its residents, present-day board proceedings are far less personal.

Over the past several decades, the Village of Cedar Grove has participated in the development of Amsterdam Park along the shores of Lake Michigan as well as developing a softball field just north of Union Avenue, Windmill Park along South Main Street, and Independence Park, which is more commonly referred to as "the new park," along Ramaker Avenue. The three additional parks supplement Veterans Memorial Park in providing excellent recreational facilities for area residents. Memorial Park, which was the village's first true park, was dedicated in July of 1930 in honor of local veterans who served in World War I.

The village has also played a role in the development of our

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local museum and recently acquired TeRonde House as well as providing a new, much larger village library, expanded fire department facilities, improved wastewater treatment facilities to allow additional development within the village, and an office addition to the village garage.

## - Chapter Four -

### Village Churches

Edited from Articles Provided by Each Congregation

*It is to be regretted that so many of the important facts concerning the guidance of God, with the first settlers, vanished with them into the grave... The history of those days, like the giant forests, which once adorned God's beautiful earth, has vanished... We still have fragments of these histories, stored in the memories of some very aged people, but which have lost their freshness, and so miss the thread which runs through these histories... But these things are now beyond recall, so we will concern ourselves with the things which still remain with us, lest in our forgetfulness, our children will some day say, "Why didn't they record those things for us?"*

Rev. Abram Klerk  
June 30, 1905

It is obvious that Reverend Klerk, who served as pastor of Cedar Grove's First Reformed Church during the early 1900s, had a deep appreciation of history. He would, no doubt, be very grateful for the dozens of volunteers who have documented this history of our village for generations to come. In reviewing and compiling historical accounts of Cedar Grove's four churches, one can clearly see "the thread which runs through these histories." It is obvious that there is an interconnection, a lineage of churches which in many ways parallels the strong Dutch heritage of the community. The establishment and growth of each congregation reflects the courage and perseverance that brought the early Dutch immigrants to this area in the mid-1800s.

While some local church records are quite detailed through specific periods of time, the information regarding other time

periods is more sketchy in nature, leaving room for speculation. The following summaries are based on information provided by each of the village's four churches, and are designed to provide an overview of each church within the community.

### **First Presbyterian Church**

The First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove is the oldest congregation in the village, having its beginning in the Dutch immigration of 1847 and 1848. Rev. Pieter Zonne, who had been tutored by Dutch theologians H. P. Scholte and R. C. Van Raalte, was the spiritual leader of a group of Dutch immigrants that settled in this area in 1847. An article about Dutch immigrants, which was originally published in the *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, Vol. 1, 1917-1918, states:

*Unusual conditions, political, economic, and religious, have, from time to time, caused Hollanders to emigrate to foreign lands, and during the decade 1840-1850 many set sail for the United States.... Three separate parties, each under a prominent minister, were formed for the purpose of founding settlements in the United States. Rev. R. C. VanRaalte led his people to the eastern shore of Lake Michigan, where they founded settlements which later came to be among the prosperous communities of Michigan.... Under Rev. H. P. Scholte a party of Dutch immigrants went to southern Iowa and settled a large tract of land purchased from the government.... The party led by Rev. P. Zonne secured by purchase from the government a section of country bordering on Lake Michigan, some twenty miles south of the present city of Sheboygan.*

On September 6, 1848, a small group of Dutch immigrants led by Rev. Pieter Zonne met and organized the first church of the Reformed faith in what soon became the Town of Holland. Elders were elected, and a call was extended to Reverend Zonne who had been ministering to the needs of the small but growing Dutch community for nearly a year.

For the first several years of its existence, the church functioned as an independent organization. A small log church was erected on a knoll on the east side of Green Bay Road, now

known as State Highway 32, on land that Reverend Zonne had purchased. For approximately twelve years, this building served as the place of worship for the group.

The church was incorporated as a Presbyterian Church on May 23, 1853, perhaps making it the oldest Dutch Presbyterian church in the country. The congregation was thereafter known as the First Presbyterian Church of Town of Holland. The five members of the congregation who accompanied Reverend Zonne in signing the Certificate of Organization were G. Veldhorst, J. Kiessel, J.D. Walvoort, B. Wissink, and T. Schuppert. Immediately following the church's incorporation, Reverend Zonne deeded the parcel of land on which the church stood for the sum of "six pence." The land was legally described as being "In the Northwest Quarter of Section 23, being eight rods long and four rods wide on which the meeting house stands on the East side of the Green Bay Road."

Additional land was acquired in 1860 for the construction of a larger church to accommodate the growing congregation. Reverend Zonne remained pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Town of Holland until his death on August 8, 1865. Reverend Zonne had once expressed that upon his passing he desired to be buried on the spot where his first pulpit stood. When he passed away in 1865 that wish was granted. Today, a simple marble slab marks his grave, recording the fact that he organized the first church in the Cedar Grove area.

Following Reverend Zonne's death, the church was without a pastor for a period of about four years. During that time, another Presbyterian group was worshipping in a schoolhouse just south of the Village of Cedar Grove. The Holland Presbyterian Church of Milwaukee, served by Rev. Cornelius VanDerVen, Rev. Frank Shroek, and Rev. John VanDeLuyster, held services and administered sacraments in the schoolhouse for nearly eleven years. Records indicate that the three pastors traveled by boat from Milwaukee to Port Washington and then traveled by ox team to the Cedar Grove area.

Early in 1869, the First Presbyterian Church extended a call to Rev. John VanDeLuyster to become pastor of the Town of Holland congregation. He accepted the call and because his leadership was known and acceptable to the group that had been

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meeting south of the village they soon united with the First Presbyterian Church. Reverend VanDeLuyster initially resided with members of the Zonne family. After the first few months of his pastorate, two acres of land were purchased from the Zonne heirs and a manse was erected on the property.

The church experienced steady growth and a prosperous record for its first thirty years. Its greatest growth, however, began in 1884 when Rev. John W. Roth started his pastorate of more than three decades. Dr. Roth's education had begun in his native South Africa and later continued in the Netherlands. Eventually, he came to the United States and received a degree from the McCormick Seminary in Chicago, Illinois. Dr. Roth believed in "indoctrination from the cradle," and was reputed to be an accomplished artist and poet as well as a proficient translator of the ancient languages.

A number of notable events happened during Dr. Roth's long pastorate at the First Presbyterian Church. Shortly after his installation on January 14, 1884, the cornerstone was laid for a new house of worship. The forty-by-eighty-foot structure was built at a cost of \$4,500 on the site of the previous church, adjacent to the present Presbyterian Cemetery on the north end of the village. A new manse was built across the road from the church in 1893.

In 1898, a number of families in the church left to become charter members of the First Presbyterian Church in nearby



First Presbyterian Church Located Just North of Cedar Grove in the Early 1900s  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

Sheboygan. In the century that has since passed, the two congregations have maintained a close relationship.

In 1910, the decision was made to deliver a sermon in English one Sunday afternoon each month. Within a year this was increased to two English services per month, and within another two years English services were conducted every Sunday afternoon. This shift from Dutch to English became necessary because many young people in the congregation did not understand the language of their immigrant parents. Dr. Roth, who had been educated in both languages, helped ease the transition.

In May of 1915, after thirty-one years of service to the congregation, Dr. Roth's pastorate ended suddenly when he was stricken with paralysis on a Sunday morning. He died twelve years later and, like the first pastor of the congregation, was buried near the church he had served for so long.

In 1920, with Rev. John VerStraate as pastor, the decision was made to move from the old churchyard just north of Cedar Grove into the village itself. The congregation was canvassed for subscriptions, and \$50,000 was pledged for the new edifice. Land



First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove  
(Photo Courtesy of First Presbyterian Church)



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was purchased in Cedar Grove and a new church was built. On Sunday, November 13, 1921, the present building, with its three large stained glass windows and Austin pipe organ, was dedicated. The manse was completed about two years later. Construction costs for both the church and manse totaled \$96,000. The former manse and property on the west side of the road were sold, while the land on the east side of the road was retained as a cemetery. The old country manse still stands on the west side of the road. The church, however, was torn down to enlarge the cemetery which is now owned and managed by the Presbyterian Cemetery Association.

In 1936 the First Presbyterian Church lost over three hundred members when they left with the church's pastor to form a new congregation. The new congregation eventually became Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church. According to the minutes of the Presbyterian Church's General Assembly of 1937, the exodus left the First Presbyterian Church with a membership of only 106. The suddenly small congregation was left with a huge physical plant and equally huge debt in the middle of the Great Depression.

The First Presbyterian Church survived largely due to the dedication of remaining church members and the leadership of Dr. Harry B. Foster and his wife Helen. Dr. Foster, who had been serving as pastor of the Presbyterian Church, in Reedsburg, Wisconsin came to Cedar Grove's First Presbyterian Church in 1936 and served as stated pulpit supply for two years before being formally installed as pastor. During that time Dr. Foster, ever optimistic and hopeful, worked to rebuild the morale of the congregation and to reduce the congregation's debt. Dr. Foster's acquaintance with denominational leaders and patience with the situation helped the congregation through a very difficult time.

Through the cooperation of the Presbyterian Church's Board of National Missions, the Administrative Council of the Synod, and the support and donations of the congregants, the debt of nearly \$25,000 was eventually paid in full and the Board of National Missions handed over the satisfied mortgages to church trustees. Shortly thereafter, the local church's Articles of Incorporation were amended and the name of the congregation was changed to "The First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove, Wisconsin."

In the early 1970s during the pastorate of Rev. R. Bruce

Meyer, the church's educational facilities were expanded and the building was remodeled. In subsequent years, a handicapped entrance was built, a youth center was created, and the sanctuary was completely repaired and redecorated.

A long and distinguished list of pastors has served the congregation of the First Presbyterian Church through the years, including:

Rev. Pieter Zonne	1853-1865
Rev. John VanDeLyster	1869-1870
Rev. John Arends	1870-1873
Rev. John I. Fles	1873-1880
Rev. Evert Bos	1880-1883
Dr. John W. Roth	1884-1915
Rev. John Ver Straate	1915-1925
Rev. John J. DeWaard	1925-1936
Dr. Harry B. Foster	1936-1943
Dr. Jacob Bajema	1944-1945
Dr. Rev. Edward Huenemann	1949-1952
Rev. Robert VanderHart	1954-1957
Dr. Cedric Jaggard	1958-1965
Rev. Ernest Gutha	1966-1971
Rev. R. Bruce Meyer	1971-1974
Rev. Arlest B. Hall, Jr.	1976-1980
Rev. William Stone	1981-1983
Rev. Robert Woodyard	1984-1992
Rev. Paul VanLoon (Interim)	1991-1994
Rev. Stephen Pike	1994-present

### **First Reformed Church**

According to denominational history, the First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove, which was organized in 1853, was first called a "mission." Records of the First Presbyterian Church of the Town of Holland state that a group of its members, under the leadership of Messrs B. Veldhorst, B. Wissink, and T. Schuppert, withdrew to organize a Reformed Church in Cedar Grove at that time. The congregation's organizational meeting was held at the home of H.J. Boland on February 20, 1853. In the presence of Justice of the Peace Vrede Regter, the First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove was incorporated.

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A log home is believed to have served as the first meeting place for this small group of worshippers. An early history of the church, written in Dutch by Rev. Abram Klerk in 1905, described the zeal of early church members as they gathered to worship:

*The people worshipped God in their homes, but were not satisfied until they also had a place for public worship. What the people had worked for and prayed for they had accomplished, but with this new beginning they still did not have a church to worship in, nor a parsonage. But our forefathers were not easily discouraged, and "having put their hand to the plow, there was no turning back!" Since there was no church building, a home had to take the place for services. Thus they gathered together in the home of John Kreunen, about a mile and a half southwest of the present location of the church. It was small but the people came, hungry for the crumbs that fell from the table of the Lord, and they were fed!*

The church's first consistory included Elders T. Schuppert, G. Davelaar, D. Meengs, and J.W. Stapelkamp, and Deacons D.Z. Voskuil, G.J. Hilbelink, and H.J. Traas. Under their leadership the congregation purchased eight acres of land from Gerrit Kolste for the sum of \$200. Shortly thereafter, a call was extended to Rev. William VanLeeuwen who was then a pastor in Chicago. His annual salary of \$350 was to be paid in quarterly installments, with benefits including free rent, a garden, and firewood as needed. Reverend VanLeeuwen began his work as the first regularly ordained pastor of the Reformed Church in Cedar Grove in 1857.

Church records state that \$445.48 was allotted to construct a church building in 1857. This structure was later used by the church for other purposes and was eventually moved to a farm currently owned by the Lloyd DeRuyter family. The congregation decided to construct a new, larger church building in 1864, when its previous structure began to be used by the Dutch school. The new church building had a sloping gravel walk to the street, bordered by rows of stately poplars. A platform called "the stand" was positioned at the street for curbside drop-off of parishioners from horse-drawn buggies. Rev. Herman Stobbelaar was installed as the pastor of the congregation

at the same occasion as the church's dedication.

The earliest membership records of the First Reformed Church indicate that in 1860 the number of church families had reached forty, with a total of 142 communicant members. In the next thirty years the number of church families nearly tripled. Minutes of a congregational meeting in 1887 stated that:

*The church auditorium is filled to capacity on the Lord's Day. The catechism classes and the Sunday School are growing considerably. The Christian Society which meets Sunday evenings is growing too large for the chapel and may be compelled to use the church auditorium.*

The passage of time has brought many changes that reflect cultural changes within the Dutch community itself. During the pastorate of Rev. Herman Borgers in 1875, families were requested "to sit together in the service," meaning that men and women no longer had to sit in separate sections of the church. Prior to



First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove  
(Photo Courtesy First Reformed Church)

this, men sat on one side of a high partition between the rows of seats, while the women and children sat on the opposite side.

The congregation purchased a church bell in 1883. At the time of its purchase, it was decided that both quality and quantity must be considered. The bell was to weigh no more than 550 pounds. That same bell is still used to call local parishioners to church each Sunday morning.

In 1893 an additional chapel was built to be used for Sunday School, Christian Society meetings, and the pastor's study. Years later the building was sold to J.W. Kolste, and today it serves as a home just west of the Union Station mini-mart.

The pioneer church took a firm stand against dancing and liquor. During the church's early years, several members were reportedly brought before the consistory for being intoxicated. Generally in these instances, the offending parties were expected to provide a confession of guilt before the congregation during the following Sunday service. The church also petitioned the village board not to allow dancing in village halls on holidays.

Work on the present church building was begun in the summer of 1905 under the direction of Jacob Leenhouts, an architect and member of the Reformed Church of Milwaukee. Construction costs totaled \$13,468.

When the new church was completed, the old church building was sold for the modest sum of \$275 and was moved to a site between the current Union Station mini-mart and DeZwaan Restaurant. There the building was used as a furniture store and funeral parlor until its demolition in 1973. In 1912 the old brick parsonage was replaced by the present, more commodious frame structure.

All of the First Reformed Church's worship services were conducted in Dutch until 1907. At that time, the morning service was changed to English, but holiday services continued to be delivered in the native language of the early immigrants. It was not until 1919, over a decade later, that Christmas services began to be presented in English. This modernization no doubt provoked some controversy among older congregants.

The congregation of the First Reformed Church celebrated its 100th anniversary in 1954 with 316 families and 715 communicant members listed on the church rolls at that time. Special commemorative services included addresses by Rev. John

DenOuden, who had previously served the First Reformed Church, and Rev. Raymond Meengs, a son of the church. A homecoming picnic and special communion service were other highlights of the celebration.

In July of 1955, the congregation purchased the J.D. Walvoord property just south of the present church parsonage. The seven-room house which was purchased for approximately \$9,700 added much needed space for Sunday School and catechism. After an educational wing was added to the church in the mid-1960s, the house was sold to Harvey VanEss and was moved to its present location on South Second Street.

On June 7, 1959, the First Reformed Church introduced a second Sunday morning worship service to ease crowding in the church's sanctuary. Prior to this, many parishioners were forced to sit on chairs located in aisles, entrances, and exits. Under the leadership of Rev. Louis Branning, other actions were taken to deal with the ever-pressing need for space as well. Groundbreaking for a new educational wing occurred in May of 1965 with concurrent remodeling of the sanctuary. The total cost of this extensive building and remodeling project was approximately \$150,000.

By the mid-1960s, a committee was also being organized by the Reformed Church's Classis of Wisconsin to consider the formation of a second Reformed Church in the community. Shortly thereafter, approximately forty families left the First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove to become charter members of Faith Reformed Church.

The First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove was led by one minister at a time for over 125 years. That changed in 1986 when Rev. Joe Moore joined Rev. Wayne Tripp in shepherding the congregation. As of 1994, the congregation included 266 families and 410 communicant members.

Eighteen different pastors have served the First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove during its 140-year history including:

Rev. William VanLeeuwen	1857-1861
Rev. Jacob VanDerMeulen	1861-1863
Rev. Herman Stobbelaar	1865-1873
Rev. Herman Borgers	1875-1881

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Rev. Andrew Wormser	1882-1887
Rev. Evert William Stapelkamp	1888-1894
Rev. Henry Veldman	1895-1898
Rev. John Jacob VanZanten	1899-1903
Rev. Abram Klerk	1903-1911
Rev. Cornelius Kuyper	1911-1934
Rev. Gary DeJong	1934-1939
Rev. John DenOuden	1939-1946
Rev. John Euwema	1946-1950
Rev. Ray Olthof	1951-1968
Rev. Louis M. Branning	1958-1968
Rev. Cornelius Hoekstra	1968-1976
Rev. Wayne Nellis Tripp	1977-1995
Rev. Joe Thomas Moore	1986-1997

### **Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church**

The Village of Cedar Grove became the home of a third congregation in 1936 with the establishment of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church. This church, which is one of the first Orthodox Presbyterian congregations in the United States, was organized on June 9, 1936, with Rev. John DeWaard as founding pastor.

Reverend DeWaard, a graduate of Princeton Seminary, had served for over a decade as pastor of the village's First Presbyterian Church. Then on June 7, 1936, the Presbytery of Milwaukee sent a representative to the First Presbyterian Church's morning worship service to read a resolution forbidding Reverend DeWaard from continuing his ministry there. This dramatic action followed a protracted debate about church doctrine between Reverend DeWaard and the synod and general assembly of the Presbyterian Church. These events unquestionably created a very difficult situation for all involved.

The situation soon revealed that Reverend DeWaard had a significant following within his first congregation. According to several written histories, when Reverend DeWaard walked out of the First Presbyterian Church that summer morning in 1936 over three hundred church members rose from their seats and joined him.

Within days of the Presbytery forcing Reverend DeWaard from the First Presbyterian Church, an organizational meeting





Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove  
(Photo Courtesy Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church)

was held in the village hall to consider the establishment of a new congregation. In addition to formally calling Reverend DeWaard as pastor, the congregants elected a number of former elders and deacons from the First Presbyterian Church to serve the new congregation in the same capacity.

The first worship services of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church were held in the village hall. A history of the church, written by Rev. Henry Fikkert on the occasion of the congregation's fiftieth anniversary celebration, describes how construction of the new Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church building began. Reverend Fikkert stated that "Pastor and people joined together in arduous labor to dig the excavation for the foundation and basement."

On November 6, 1936, the cornerstone of the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church was laid at its present location on Union Avenue. During the next four years, worship services were held in the basement of the structure while the congregation awaited completion of the upper portion of the building. The official dedication of Cedar Grove's Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church took place on November 14, 1940.



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The church's pipe organ was installed in 1948. Six years later, the present manse was built to house the pastor's family. An educational wing, aptly named the John J. DeWaard Memorial Christian Education Wing, was constructed in 1969. This addition provided fifteen classrooms, a library, a church office, and a pastor's study. More recent construction in 1985 included an addition to the front of the building to accommodate the installation of an elevator.

Seven pastors have served Calvary Church during its first sixty years including:

Rev. John J. DeWaard	1936-1940
Rev. George J. Willis	1941-1944
Rev. Dean W. Adair	1945-1947
Rev. Robert K. Churchill	1948-1959
Rev. Carl J. Reitsma	1960-1966
Rev. Henry H. Fikkert	1966-1991
Rev. Donald Ritsman	1991-present

### **Faith Reformed Church**

Like the Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Cedar Grove's youngest congregation, Faith Reformed Church, had its roots in another church within the community. Growth within the congregation of the First Reformed Church during the late 1950s and early 1960s had resulted in overcrowding at Sunday morning worship services. Although the situation was alleviated somewhat by the introduction of a second Sunday morning worship service, other options continued to be discussed. A church history of First Reformed Church reports that "for a number of years there had been a few who hoped that our congregation would mother another Reformed Church in the community for the purpose of relieving the crowded conditions in the church."

To that end, a meeting was held on June 11, 1964, to discuss the formation of a new congregation. The initial meeting was attended by Alfred DeRuyter, Oliver Davies, Roland Debbink, Joseph Wisse, Earl Meinen, and Austin TenHaken. Also in attendance was Rev. Jack Boerigter, pastor of the First Reformed Church of Oostburg, who represented the Extension Committee of the Reformed Church's Classis of Wisconsin.

The first order of business was the election of officers for the start-up committee. Through these elections Alfred DeRuyter was chosen as chairman. The selection of a committee clerk was not as easy. With four candidates nominated for the clerk position, the initial vote was so spread out that there was no declared winner. At that time Joe Wisse and Roland Debbink, who were the two candidates with the most votes during the first balloting were declared nominees for a second vote. Unfortunately, the second vote for the position resulted in a tie. Rather than cast the deciding vote, Reverend Boerigter suggested a drawing of straws. As the church minutes read, "The one that drew the longest straw would be declared elected. Roland Debbink drew the shortest straw, so Joseph Wisse was declared elected as clerk." At that same meeting, Earl Meinen was declared church treasurer, a position he still holds within the church in 1997.

The new congregation's main advertising appears to have been provided by announcements in the First Reformed Church's bulletin. For two consecutive Sundays, an announcement was published inviting interested persons to an informational meeting on June 30, 1964, in the basement of the First Reformed Church.

The first worship service of the fledgling congregation was held on July 12, 1964, in the gymnasium of the Cedar Grove Elementary School on VanAltena Avenue. Rev. August Tellinghuisen, Field Secretary for the Board of North American Missions from the Reformed Church's Particular Synod of Chicago, led the worship services two Sundays each month with other Reformed Church ministers filling the pulpit as appointed by the Classis of Wisconsin.

On January 12, 1965, the Classis of Wisconsin held a meeting to formally organize Cedar Grove's newest congregation. Ninety eligible voters representing approximately forty families were in attendance. It was at that meeting that the name Faith Reformed Church was chosen and that the first twelve-member consistory was elected. The date to close charter membership was set as Easter Sunday, April 18, 1965.

On February 22, 1965, a congregational meeting was held to consider calling a pastor for the young congregation. It was obviously a difficult task, as the group voted four times before reaching the two-thirds majority required. Mr. John VanMantgem, one of

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the four Western Theological Seminary students on the ballot, was finally selected. He was hired at an annual salary of \$5,000 with an additional \$500 per year allocated for utility expenses.

In April of 1965, groundbreaking ceremonies were held for a church parsonage. This house on South Fourth Street remained the parsonage until a larger home was built just south of the original parsonage in 1982. The approximate seven-acre tract of land for the church and parsonage was purchased from Arthur Meinen, a charter member of the new church, for one dollar.

The parsonage quickly became a significant meeting place for groups within the young congregation. The house was built with direct access to its basement through the building's attached garage, and the parsonage was located just two blocks from the village's elementary school gymnasium which was still being used for Sunday services. During the church's early years, the parsonage basement was used for everything from committee meetings and choir practice to Sunday School and Bible Class.

By August of 1965, the congregation began formulating plans for its first church building. A book entitled *Christ and Architecture* provided inspiration for Faith Reformed Church's unusual design. The book was written by Donald Bruggink, a theology professor at Western Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan, and Carl Droppers, an architect in Cleveland, Ohio. Unknown to many who read the book at that time, the authors were cousins who had grown up in the Cedar Grove area years earlier. Both had immediate and extended family in the young congrega-



Faith Reformed Church of Cedar Grove  
(Photo Courtesy Faith Reformed Church)

tion.

Faith Reformed Church's swooping roof line was designed to draw worshippers' eyes upward to the heavens and the glory of God. The pulpit was centrally located, and was elevated to grant parishioners visibility of the speaker and to communicate prominence over the sacraments. To give a sense of permanence, the church's Communion Table and carved-granite baptismal font were purposely constructed to be large and weighty. The Communion Table, twelve-feet long and five-feet wide, is an actual table where the pastor and elders sit as communion is being served.

Four pastors have served the Faith Reformed Church of Cedar Grove through its first thirty years including:

Rev. John VanMantgem	1965-1971
Rev. Philip Frens	1971-1974
Rev. Leon Dykstra	1975-1988
Rev. R. "Van" Rathbun	1989-present



## - Chapter Five -

### Elementary Schools

By Marjorie Dirkse

### High Schools

By Wilfred Gesch

#### **Elementary Schools**

**A**s the early Dutch settlers arrived in Sheboygan County, their first concern was building homes for their families. Once the homes were established, churches and schools soon followed. Before public schools were available, children were taught at home or in some settler's cabin. Public schools came into existence as the population increased and the demand for better educational opportunities grew.

The Northwest Ordinance of 1787 established the government of the Northwest Territory which included lands that later became Wisconsin and several other midwestern states. It declared that "religion, morality and knowledge being necessary to good government and happiness of mankind, schools and the means of education shall be forever encouraged."

Wisconsin territorial law of 1840 laid a plan for townships to organize schools, including the examination and certification of teachers. When Wisconsin became a state in 1848, its Constitution provided for free education for everyone between the ages of four and twenty. It also provided for the election of a state superintendent of schools.

It has been frequently reported that the first school in the Town of Holland was held in the home of a Mr. Ellsworth in 1848 and was taught by a Mr. VanKeuben. It is known, however, that a group of Hollanders had organized a school district east of Oostburg as early as 1847. This school was called Jefferson

School District No. 1 in honor of our nation's third president.

From the Book of Records of School District No. 2 in the Town of Holland, much is known about the beginning of a school which would later be known as South Cedar Grove School. This school, as well as many smaller rural schools, eventually consolidated with the Cedar Grove School District. All of the schools that ended up consolidating with the Cedar Grove School District in the early 1960s will be discussed briefly in this chapter.

In 1849 a meeting notice was served according to law by William Berenschot to forty-two qualified voters of what later became known as the South Cedar Grove School. Many, but not all, of the forty-two qualified voters were Dutch. A meeting was held on July 14, 1849, at two o'clock in the afternoon at the home of Sweezy Burr for the purpose of organizing the school district. The meeting had been requested by William Mitchell who was the town superintendent of schools. Excellent records were kept by the school district, thus providing us with accurate information about a one-room school from the mid-1800s. Census reports, teachers' names and wages, attendance records, books and supplies used, and details regarding the buildings are included in available records.

It is recorded that "Burr agreed to give a deed of 1/2 acre of land on the Northwest corner of the Southwest quarter of Section 25 at any time within three months of this date on receiving ten dollars." Sweezy Burr was subsequently elected treasurer of Joint School District No. 2, and James VanKeuben was chosen as the clerk. In a special report the school district clerk stated that

*...the number of scholars between the age of 4 years and the age of 20 years on the 30th day of March 1850 is 87. I do further certify that school has been taught by a qualified teacher three months in the year ending the first of April.*

At a meeting held on May 14, 1850, district voters approved a tax to defray the necessary expenses for the teacher's wages and boarding and for repairs to the schoolhouse. Martha E. Lane of Abbot, later the Town of Sherman, signed a contract agreeing to teach the three-month summer term for the sum of one dollar and twenty-five cents per week. The annual report dated September

1, 1850, stated that Mr. Sylvester M. Higbee was paid seventeen dollars per month when he taught. Male teachers always received a higher wage than their female counterparts. The report further stated that:

*...the schoolhouse was built of logs with a shingled roof and was valued at \$80 without entry and closets. It was not furnished with outdoor conveniences. It was furnished with blackboards. Checks totaling \$132.85 had been written. Books used in the school were as follows: Sander's Readers, Ray's Arithmetic, and Webster's Spelling Book. School had been visited by the Town Superintendent two times and by the officers of the district board five times.*

At the school's annual meeting on October 15, 1850, a motion was made and supported to have three months of winter school commencing on or about the first day of December and three months of summer school commencing on or about the first day of May. The winter term was to be taught by a qualified man teacher and the summer school was to be taught by a qualified woman teacher. The winter class was usually taught by a man because it was a generally accepted principle that a man could keep order more effectively than a woman. The winter session was attended by older students because they were not needed as much for farm work during the winter months. Younger children usually attended the summer session, keeping them out of the way of their busy parents.

Minutes from the September 27, 1852, annual meeting of Joint School District No. 2 stated that it was

*...motioned that S. Burr be the 'lybrarian' of this district the ensuing year. Carried. The job of wood for the schoolhouse was let to Hendrick Walvoord, 12 cord to be delivered at the schoolhouse in said district by the first day of December next at 75 cents per cord. Said wood is to be inspected and received by S. Burr. For the 1854 school year each family shall furnish stove wood on or before the 1st day of December next. The overseer of wood will be exempt from the wood tax.*



At a special meeting in March of 1856, the district board was authorized to build a new schoolhouse before the winter term. It was to be thirty feet long and twenty-two feet wide, balloon-framed, covered outside with one-inch boards, inside plaster and lathed, and painted twice outside. Heat was provided by a stove in the center of the room. Handmade benches seated four to six pupils per bench.

According to early records, at one time the building housed 120 pupils for the winter term. Because the enrollment was so large, it was decided to expand the facilities into a two-room school. To provide this capability, a west wing was added to the building in 1885 at a cost of \$400. The district continued to use the building as a two-room school until the early 1920s when due to decreased enrollment the building was once again operated as a one-room school. In 1947, the school building was transformed back into a two-room state-graded school and operated that way until it closed in 1960.

Approximately eight square-miles of land were included in the south side district when it was first organized. To shorten the distance children had to walk to school and to relieve overcrowding, Amsterdam and North Cedar Grove School Districts were organized in 1852 and 1857 respectively. With the addition of these two new schools, the size of Joint School District No. 2 was reduced to approximately five square-miles.

The *Sheboygan County Centennial School Directory*, which was published in 1948, reported a school term of nine months was begun at Amsterdam School in 1881. Ever alert to modern trends in education, Amsterdam school installed blackboards in 1912 and began to furnish free text books to students in 1928. By 1948 the Amsterdam school had a piano, a radio, modern textbooks and an active PTA. Elvira Prinsen Klug had seven pupils the last year the school was open. When the school closed, the district was annexed to Lakeview, South Cedar Grove and Cedar Grove districts. The school building was moved and remodeled and is now the home of Mr. and Mrs. Jim Eckwielen.

The North Cedar Grove School District No. 10 had the distinction of serving as the first high school in the Town of Holland. William C. Walvoord tells in his book *Windmill Memories* about the "upper room." The idea was to keep the older boys and girls

in school for two or three years longer than they would normally attend and to have them at school in the time of the year when they could best be spared from the farm work. The text books were the same as those used in the ninth and tenth grades at Sheboygan Falls High School. In his book, Walvoord writes that

*...one interesting peculiarity of the Township Holland schools was the use of two languages. Our teachers wanted us to talk American on the school grounds, but the vernacular of our home folks was not soon forgotten or silenced. Frequently there resulted a comical mix-up of Dutch and English, 'Yankee Dutch' as it was called.*

North Cedar Grove School was closed in 1961 and its district became a part of the Cedar Grove School District.

Early meeting minutes of Fairview School District No. 6, which was located west of Cedar Grove along the present County Highway RR, were recorded in German script. The *Centennial School Directory* describes in detail the new schoolhouse of stone that was to be built in 1869.

*District members were to deliver one cord stone and a box of sand for each 80 'ackers' of land before May 1st. The schoolhouse was to have an entry and eight windows. In September the stove was polished and delivered with furniture into the new schoolhouse and the old building was sold for \$10.00.*

A frame schoolhouse was constructed in the early 1900s and was used until 1944 when Elinore Gesch taught just six pupils there. Although the district included a large number of school-aged children, many attended parochial schools. When Fairview School closed, the land was annexed to the Random Lake and Maple Grove School Districts. Like many rural school buildings, it was remodeled into a house and is now occupied by the Jerome Walber family.

The building used for many years by Maple Grove District No. 5, which was located at the intersection of County Highways D and KW, was erected in 1899 for the sum of \$600. The necessary funds were to be raised in annual installments of \$200. The labor was done gratis by the men of the district. Electric lights

were installed in 1937. For some years the minutes of that district's meetings were written in Dutch. Maple Grove became part of the Cedar Grove School District in 1958.

Lake View School District No. 12, which is now Lesch Audio and TV on Sauk Trail Road, improved its school building by installing a water system in 1945. When it closed in 1960, the district was divided between the Oostburg and Cedar Grove School Districts.

Greene School, which was located on County Highway A northwest of Cedar Grove, was named for Charles Greene, the first clerk. None of the earliest mentioned voters had Dutch surnames. Part of the original school burned in the early 1900s and was replaced by a building that was used until 1962 when students began attending Oostburg and Cedar Grove schools. The remodeled building is now the home of the John Mentink family.

Beaver Creek School District No. 4 had a "modern brick and tile building erected in 1919." After it closed in the early 1960s, it began to be used by the Beaver Creek Saddle and Bridle Club. When the school closed, this district was divided between the Oostburg and Cedar Grove School Districts.

Hoard School, which was located on County GW northwest of Cedar Grove, closed in 1958. The *1948-49 County School Directory* states that

*...although the school still has the cross lighting prevalent in old school buildings, it has the only classroom covered with wallpaper in the county. An antique grand piano, colorful drapes, and well-arranged book cases help to make the room homelike in appearance.*

Liberty School Joint District No. 11, which served portions of the Towns of Holland and Sherman, was located on the corner of County CC and G northwest of Cedar Grove. A model of this school building, which served rural Cedar Grove from 1868 until its closing in 1961, was commissioned by Richard Dykstra and was constructed by Mark A. Hesselink and Erin Dykstra. The school model is presently on display at the Cedar Grove Public Library. When Liberty School closed in 1961, portions of its district were annexed to the Random Lake and Cedar Grove School Districts.

Surprisingly, the Village of Cedar Grove did not have its own



Scale-Model of Liberty School Built in 1995 to Help Preserve  
the History of One-Room Schools.  
(Photo Courtesy Dykstra Engineering)

school until 1906. At about that time a meeting was called to consider changing the boundaries of the North Side and South Side Schools that village students had been attending. Instead, it was decided that the village would form a separate school district. At the first meeting of the voters, held June 11, 1906, it was decided to build a school on a lot purchased from Dr. VanAltena. For part of the 1906-1907 school term, classes were held in the village hall because the school building was not completed by the beginning of the school year.

The first teachers in the village's new two-room school were Anna Meengs, principal, who received forty-eight dollars per month and Jennie Lubbers who received forty dollars per month. In 1907 an extra teacher was hired. During the 1914-1915 school year, agriculture, manual training and domestic science classes were added to the curriculum, and slate blackboards were installed. The village's first elementary school building was used until 1922 when a new, larger structure was built just to the west. The original elementary school building was then used for many years as a Masonic Lodge and more recently as a storage building for the Holland Guild Gezelschap.

The 1922 VanAltena Avenue School included four large classrooms, a gymnasium, a large playground, and some of the most



Cedar Grove's First Elementary School in Approximately 1907.  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

modern, up-to-date equipment available. The new brick building overwhelmingly displayed Cedar Grove's interest in a high educational standard. With enrollment still rising, an addition was soon needed. The new addition provided more classrooms, a cafeteria, a larger gym, and shower rooms in the basement. Finally, with increased enrollment due to the consolidation of rural schools, six new classrooms, including a large kindergarten room, were added to the east end of the building in 1959.

In 1991 the school district's former Academy building was razed to make room for a new elementary school. Then in January of 1992, the VanAltena Avenue elementary school building was closed and preschool through sixth-grade classes moved into the new Union Avenue school. The new school includes an early-childhood-education classroom as well as a large library, media center and computer lab. The south entrance of the new elementary school building is framed with ornamental stonework that previously adorned the entrance of the Memorial Academy, and several interior doors within the new school are framed with decorative woodwork from the second floor of the former Academy building.

The new elementary school includes 57,000 square-feet of

space at a total cost of \$3,664,523. The school was formally dedicated on Wednesday, September 9, 1992, with elementary school principal Clay Acker serving as master of ceremonies and teacher Carolyn VanDriest giving the invocation. The dedicatory address was presented by then State Superintendent of Schools Herbert Grover. Following the program, students and staff led tours of the new facility.

Since elementary school students had witnessed the opening of the Memorial Academy's cornerstone when that building was razed, they were also invited to the ceremonial placement of the new elementary school's datestone on September 10, 1992. On that day Glenn Meerdink assisted Carl Huenink in setting the datestone in an interior wall between two doors that lead into the school's theater on the east end of the school cafeteria. The Memorial Academy's 1924 cornerstone was set in the same wall. The contents of the new datestone include a variety of materials representative of the time the stone was placed but also include a Bible and some photographs that were previously in the Academy's 1924 cornerstone. Other items from the 1924 Academy cornerstone were donated to the local museum.

In 1964 portions of the Port Washington School District, primarily in and around the Village of Belgium, joined the Cedar Grove School District. For many years the new district's fourth-grade and fifth-grade students were taught at Belgium's Lincoln School until the building was closed in 1980 due to budget cuts.

In the very early days of public education, especially in rural schools, it was not uncommon for a few students to be older than the teacher. While some teachers were high school graduates, many were not. In some cases rural instructors simply attended a teacher training class in Plymouth or were graduates of a ninth grade program at the Hingham School. Most beginning teachers had little preparation for teaching a classroom full of children.

In 1865 new legislation created a system of state normal schools for the training of teachers. Because state normal schools could not meet the demand for teachers in Wisconsin, 1923 legislation allowed any county without a state normal school within its bounds to start its own county normal school. Although a teacher training school had been operating in Plymouth since 1920, the Sheboygan County Board approved the building of a

new county normal school by the mid-1920s. The county soon spent \$80,000 for such a facility in Sheboygan Falls. The Sheboygan County Normal School opened in 1925, and in 1929 the Madison School west of Sheboygan Falls was added as a demonstration school where students training to be teachers could observe classes and could practice teach in grades one through eight.

Though the state legislature had recommended two-year normal schools for teacher training, Sheboygan County Normal School did not become a two-year school until 1935. That year, primarily due to the depression, some students who had not been able to get a teaching position returned to school for one more year of training.

It was possible for some children in a one-room school to have the same teacher for eight years. This did not happen very often, however, because the young women who taught in the rural schools often married after a few years and did not return to the classroom. Actually there was a time when school boards would not even hire married women. This practice changed significantly during World War II when a teacher shortage forced many former teachers back into the classroom.

Much was expected of the one-room school teacher. Besides preparing many lessons, the teacher was expected to keep the school clean and warm. On cold days a teacher had to arrive early so the room would be warm by the time students arrived. Before schools had janitors, students had the responsibilities of washing the chalkboards, cleaning the erasers, sweeping the floor, putting up the flag, shoveling the walks, bringing in the mail, putting coal in the furnace, and sometimes carrying in water. The pupils who stayed after and swept the floor were usually paid a nickel or dime by the teacher.

Many rural schools had the same daily schedule because they were operated under the direct supervision of a county superintendent of schools. By the mid-1900s school usually began at approximately 9:00 o'clock with opening exercises that included reciting the Pledge of Allegiance. Following fifteen minutes of singing, small groups of pupils were called to the front of the room for short reading classes of ten or fifteen minutes. Everyone had a fifteen-minute recess, but many times the younger children



were dismissed early for recess and would play outside unsupervised. After recess arithmetic classes were held. After eating lunches that were brought from home, there was an outdoor playtime. The afternoon schedule usually included first-grade and second-grade reading classes and social studies for the older children. Following the mid-afternoon recess, most schools had language arts which included English, penmanship, and spelling. Art appreciation was taught to all grades using the Picture Study Guide from the State Department of Public Instruction. There was also a teacher's handbook of Poems and Stories.

When pupils were not in class, they worked quietly at their desks on assignments handed out by the teacher. They could also listen to the other classes and in this way the little ones learned from the older children. In a like manner, listening to the younger pupils provided a review for the older children.

In the 1940s many schools began listening to the Wisconsin School of the Air on WHA radio from Madison. A favorite of many was "Let's Sing" with Professor Edgar Gordon. Regional gatherings were held throughout the state and students would get together to meet and sing with Professor Gordon. Though radio reception was often poor, "Let's Sing" introduced many children to a music teacher. "Afield with Ranger Mac" was a popular nature radio program taught by Wakelin McNeel.

Some things never change. If you asked children of years gone by what the best part of school was, they would probably answer "recess." Today's young students would probably answer the same. Games like "Kick-the-Can," "Pom-Pom-Pull-Away," "Hide and Seek," and "Duck, Duck, Goose" were favorites on many playgrounds. Building snowmen and snow forts, having snowball fights, and playing "Fox and Goose" were favorites on winter days. When it was rainy or extremely cold, "Hang the Butcher" or "Tic Tac Toe" were played on the chalkboard. Jacks was a popular floor game.

Halloween, Christmas, and Valentine parties, and Thanksgiving dinners were important celebrations at the school. The Christmas program usually ended with a visit from Santa Claus. An end-of-the-year picnic was generally attended by many school district residents. It was this sense of community that made it difficult for some to give up their rural schools



at the time of consolidation.

To assist the county superintendent in visiting and supervising schools, the position of county supervising teacher was established in 1915. Many teachers and students remember visits from supervising teachers Miss Leona Fischer, Miss Violet Littlefield, and Miss Doris Phipps. It was their job to encourage good teaching habits and to assist teachers in any way they could. They also came with the circulating library, a box of twenty to thirty books, which was brought to the school and exchanged about every six weeks.

The County Superintendent of Schools was elected every four years in the spring election. Mr. Raymond B. Lightfoot served Sheboygan County in that capacity from 1939 until 1964. Miss Doris Phipps, who had been a supervising teacher in the county from 1942 until 1965, was appointed to take Mr. Lightfoot's place for six months until July 1, 1965, when the County Superintendent of Schools position was discontinued.

Some memories of school include going to the neighbors to sell Christmas Seals, and taking chocolate-flavored goiter pills (which have since become unnecessary because iodized salt is now commonly used). Eighth grade exams and graduation are also vivid memories of some. Large pictures of Lincoln and Washington and a beautifully framed copy of the Constitution are remembrances of time spent in the classroom. Many can still recite poems such as "The Village Blacksmith" and "The First Snowfall" which students had to memorize while in school. Some older residents undoubtedly remember outdoor privies which were sometimes tipped over as a Halloween prank. Many older teachers are grateful for today's copy machines when they recall using the messy purple pencils to make masters for their Hectograph machines.

Many people associate the one-room school with horse-and-buggy days. Yet as recently as 1960 many boys and girls in rural Wisconsin were attending the 1,200 one-room schools that still existed at that time. In 1947 the Wisconsin State Legislature directed each county board in the state to form a committee for the purpose of consolidating its local school districts. This committee, which was selected by the county board, was to hold public hearings in the districts to be reorganized. Each committee had the power to combine, alter, dissolve, or create school districts,

which sounded good but turned out to be a very difficult task.

The one-room school was a very important part of the rural community, and most parents were not eager to put their children on busses to be transported to village or city schools. The rural school system represented the most personal unit of local government, and people feared that in a larger school system they would have no voice in the education of their children. Some were not convinced that a bigger school would provide a better education for their children.

Eventually the school consolidation law was modified, requiring that all schools had to be part of a high school district by the mid-1960s. Prior to this, three, four, or even five different rural school districts could be sending their eighth-grade graduates to a single high school. After many meetings, which included many heated debates, school consolidation occurred during the early 1960s. As a direct result of this, the total number of school districts in the State of Wisconsin dropped from over 7,000 in 1940 to just 418 by 1993. The greatest change in the number of school districts occurred during the early 1960s when most rural districts consolidated with larger high school systems.

### **High Schools**

If you lived in Cedar Grove prior to 1900, where would you go to high school? Since there was no high school in the village at that time, you would probably have to rethink your educational goals. But in April of 1900, Dr. G.J. Kollen, President of Hope College in Holland, Michigan, presented the leaders of his school with a plan to establish an Academy in eastern Wisconsin. The purpose of the Academy would be to provide secondary education, with a Christian emphasis, to interested families. Hope College, which was affiliated with the Reformed Church in America, subsequently proposed the plan to the General Synod of the Reformed Church where the plan was enthusiastically received.

One person whose efforts were instrumental in bringing the Academy to Cedar Grove was the Rev. J.J. VanZanten who at the time was pastor of the Reformed Church of Cedar Grove. Soon Dr. Kollen from Hope College, four area pastors, and twenty consistency members represented a Cedar Grove delegation at a conference in Gibbsville. Cedar Grove was selected as the site of the

new Academy because its delegation presented the most attractive offer. Instruction of students began before the first Academy building was completed. Initially instruction took place in the chapel of the Reformed Church of Cedar Grove under the direct supervision of Reverend VanZanten. Miss Cornelia Walvoord, a graduate of Oshkosh Normal School, served as an assistant. During this time, the Classis of Wisconsin of the Reformed Church in America proceeded with steps to incorporate the school as well as to select a suitable building site for the new Academy. The cornerstone of the first Academy building was laid on June 26, 1901. The building, which was valued at \$3000, was completed by June of 1902 and was dedicated without debt.

In July of 1901, Egbert Winter, who was a Hope College graduate, was appointed principal of the new school. He began serving in that capacity in September of the same year with thirty-six students enrolled. In 1902 Rev. J. Sietsema, pastor of the Reformed Church in Oostburg, was appointed by the Board of Trustees to give instruction in English. The school's first seven graduates received their diplomas on June 22, 1904.

In September of 1905, Mr. Arend Lubbers donated a valuable piece of land, one-acre in size with a dwelling on it, for the purpose of supplying a residence for the principal. A more commodious dwelling was soon built at a cost of \$2500.

Within a decade of its construction, the upstairs of the Academy building was remodeled to provide more classroom space. At about that same time a Mr. J.S. Mundy of Newark, New Jersey, donated a steam heating plant for the Academy. A rededication and public inspection day was celebrated at the remodeled school on November 19, 1909, and the Academy was once again debt free by June of 1914. In that same year the Academy's Constitution was revised so that it could be included in a listing of accredited schools in the State of Wisconsin.

By 1922 the Academy's enrollment had grown to such an extent that the school could no longer operate in its existing facilities. At the following spring session of the Academy's Board of Trustees, a building plan was discussed. An official building program was soon established and five committees were commissioned to secure pledges of \$500 each. The community was canvassed and Academy Principal A.J. Visser visited area churches for financial



Original and Second Academy Building Shown Before the First Building was Moved to the Corner of Main Street and Van Altena.  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

support as well. Response was favorable and a building committee consisting of John VanDeWall, Principal A.J. Visser, Dr. A. Voskuil, G.W. Soerens, and John Renskers was formed.

Work on the new Academy building began just east of the original frame structure in the fall of 1923. The cornerstone of the new building was laid on July 4, 1924. The building project culminated with a March, 1925 dedication service at the new, modern facility. The first Academy building, which had been utilized from 1902 until 1925, was eventually moved to the northwest corner of Main Street and VanAltena Avenue where it stands to this day.

In his book entitled *Windmill Memories*, author William C. Walvoord describes how the Academy affected his education. When Mr. Walvoord graduated from the eighth grade at a local one-room school, the Academy was just being organized in the Village of Cedar Grove. Mr. Walvoord, who had no specific plans for higher education until then, entered the Academy as a freshman and graduated in June of 1904. Mr. Walvoord then continued his studies at Hope College in Holland, Michigan. Thus we see that the Academy was initially a Christian institution that served as a stepping stone to Christian colleges. Because the Academy was initially sponsored by the Reformed Church in



Memorial Academy 1928 -1929 Girls Basketball Team  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

Top Row L-R: Coach Kollen, Edith Mentink, Jean Duenk, Roland DeMaster  
Lower Row L-R: Edith Holle, Alice Hilbelink, Gerene Vander Jagt, June Lensink

America, many pupils who attended the school were members of local Reformed Church congregations.

Four years of instruction at the Academy did not consist totally of academics. In addition to an annual class play and boys and girls glee club performances, there were also boys and girls basketball teams. Because the school's enrollment was rather small, team substitutes were hard to come by especially on the girls' team. The Academy's school colors were orange and black, and the school song was "On Wisconsin."

If you look closely at the accompanying photograph, you will see that the girls' basketball team wore bloomers (fluffed-out pant-skirts) instead of now-traditional basketball shorts. Alice Hilbelink DeMaster recalls that the bloomers were held up by buttons with no elastic and certainly no zippers to help. She also recalled that in one particular game a girl's buttons popped and the bloomers left the place for which they were intended, thus creating a rather embarrassing situation. We don't know who won that game, but we certainly do know what the highlight, or should we say the "downfall," of the event was.

On September 4, 1982, seventeen members of the Academy's Class of 1932, along with their spouses, took a sentimental jour-

ney through the Academy building as a part of their fifty-year reunion. Kenneth Glewen, who was Superintendent of the Cedar Grove-Belgium School System in 1982, met the group on the front lawn of the Academy and then gave them a guided tour of the building. Mrs. Augusta Risseeuw recalled that during a devotional service at the school the song “His Eye Is On the Sparrow” was requested. She almost lost her poise when a live sparrow flew out of the piano when she opened it. Kenneth Hyink, a former teacher at the Academy, joined the reunion group for dinner at DeSmidt’s Restaurant. Mr. Hyink was remembered as a teacher who maintained an orderly study hall. Even though he seemed to be looking at papers, he was in reality observing even the slightest distraction among the students.

Former classmates traveled from as far away as Florida and California for this very special reunion. The Class of 1932 included three married couples who were classmates while in school. Those couples were Augusta DeMaster and Lewis Risseeuw, Hazel DeMaster and Willard Grotenhuis, and Dorothy Droppers and Julio DeSmith.

The Academy’s affiliation with the Reformed Church in America ended in the mid-1930s. At that time an agreement was reached whereby the Academy building could be used for Cedar Grove’s first public high school. A new Cedar Grove Village Hall, which also served as a high school gymnasium, was dedicated on November 25, 1949. The new village hall, which replaced a fire-damaged Main Street hall, was built just west of the high school on land donated by the school system. Giving the dedicatory address was former principal K.J. Hyink who was then principal at Kohler Schools. The new building which measured sixty feet by one-hundred-twenty feet housed a basketball court, stage, balcony, two shower rooms, washrooms, cloak room, ticket booth, and kitchen.

In 1963 a 21,928 square-foot addition to the high school complex was completed at a cost of \$262,000. The new facilities were dedicated on September 27, 1963. Present for the ceremonies were Ray B. Lightfoot, Sheboygan County Superintendent of Schools; Charles Bingner, Supervising Principal of the Cedar Grove Schools; Edgar Stubenrauch, architect; LeRoy Bruggink, village clerk; Tom Hawe, member of the



building committee, and Robert Huibregtse, school board director. Other program participants were Rev. Carl Reitsma, pastor of Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church who gave the invocation and benediction; Dr. James Jensen, school board treasurer; Carl Voskuil, clerk of the school board, and the high school band under the direction of Steven Speidel.

The high school addition, which included administrative offices, a teacher's lounge, classrooms, and a study hall, connected the Academy building to the former village hall. A new gymnasium was added to the north of the new offices, and the school's industrial arts area was moved from the lower level of the Academy building to a portion of the former village hall. A wall divided the former village hall in two with the north end being used for industrial arts and the south end for band lessons and rehearsal. The school district also put several portable classrooms into use between 1963 and 1970 to accommodate the high school's growing enrollment.

By 1970 additional space was needed once again so the school district, which by this time included the Village of Belgium and its surrounding area, embarked on another ambitious building program to provide a new high school. An open house for the new Cedar Grove High School was held on Saturday, November 21, 1970. Those participating in the school's dedication program included the Cedar Grove High School Band under the direction of Tom Paulson; Rev. Ernest Gutha, pastor of First Presbyterian Church; school board members Henry Dykstra and Alfred DeRuyter; high school principal Patrick Baggot; Superintendent of Schools Charles Bingner; architect Jack W. Klund; and student council representative Tom Huenink. Following the dedication service, student council members hosted tours of the building.

The new high school provided a total of 87,036 square-feet of space at a cost of \$1,675,580. The building, which was designed to accommodate four hundred students, included a large gymnasium with an adjoining swimming pool. When the new high school opened, the former Academy building as well as a large classroom over the district office began to be used as a Middle School for grades six through eight. The former village hall continued to be used for high school industrial arts classes until the mid-1980s when it was razed to make room

for a new driveway and other facilities.

In the mid-1980s seventh-grade and eighth-grade classes were moved to the west side of the high school building and several elementary school classes were moved into the Academy building. In 1991 the old brick Academy building was razed to make room for the district's new elementary school.

The following reminiscences are included to give readers an indication of how education changed from the time the high school was operated as a Reformed Church Academy until a point during the mid-1980s. While the first point in time is noted with a poem rather than a story, readers will clearly see what high school was like in the early 1900s. The poem was taken from the composition book of Jennie Meengs (Academy Class of 1904) who is the mother of Alice Hilbelink DeMaster:

*O fellow students, do you know  
(I hardly dare express it)  
That our Professor has a strap?  
He did himself confess it.*

*There in his desk-the bottom drawer;  
We know that it is hidden.  
And thousand woes to every one  
Who does not what he's bidden.*

*Or if you try to move about  
And sometimes act quite silly,  
Sometime or other he might make  
Your back feel far from chilly.*

*And now hot weather's coming on,  
And many feel like napping  
But OH! beware, beware, beware!  
You'll surely get a strapping.*

*Now pupils you must surely stop  
That endless noise and clatter;  
For if he'd get a-going once  
It would not be a very small matter.*

Jennie Lubbers  
(Mrs. Anton Haverkamp)



## Chapter 5

The following thoughts, as expressed by a member of the Class of 1942, provide a second reference point:

*There were thirty-two members in the Class of 1942. At that time, the high school staff consisted of a principal, who also taught history, as well as four or five other teachers. There were no physical education classes, no drivers education class, no busses, and no hot lunches. Athletics included only basketball and track for boys. Chorus was an extracurricular activity held after school. Band began with a part-time teacher during the 1938-1939 school year. The principal had no secretary, and did all the book-keeping by himself. Occasionally a senior helped out with the typing. This work was paid for by President Roosevelt's National Youth Administration program at a wage of approximately twenty-five cents per hour. At this time, the school had no yearbook, but did have a newspaper. Since the school had no gymnasium, the village hall along South Main Street was used for basketball games. The high school curriculum consisted of four years of English, three years of math, three years of science, and four years of history. Business classes and industrial arts were eventually introduced as options. With the limited number of classes available, each class period was about ninety minutes in length.*

When this former student returned to the high school in 1964 as an employee, she noticed many changes. By this time the school system had busses, a hot lunch program, mandatory physical education classes, and many electives. The school system also had separate elementary school and high school principals, a full-time school superintendent, and secretaries in both the elementary and high schools. There was also a full-time band director, a librarian, and a wide range of athletic activities including football and wrestling for boys, and the Girls Athletic Association (GAA) for girls.

One additional reference in time has been provided by Mr. Kenneth Glewen who served as Superintendent of the Cedar Grove-Belgium Area School District from 1971 until 1984. Some of the changes he witnessed during his tenure in office included:

*...expansion of the media center; implementation of a preschool*

*program, utilization of computers and television equipment, more semester class offerings, computerized scheduling, computerized grading, and computerized inventories. Also, because of declining enrollments, some subjects were pared down.*

As a point of reference, the following is a listing of the principals and district administrators who served the Cedar Grove-Belgium School District over the years:

### **Memorial Academy**

Principal	Egbert Winter	1901-1905
Principal	Rev. G. H. Hospers	1905-1908
Principal	P. Henkamp	1908-1911
Principal	W. P. Van Der Laan	1911-1917
Principal	Theodore Zweemer	1917-1920
Principal	John Meengs	1920-1922
Principal	Arthur Visser	1922-1929
Principal	Herbert G. Mentink	1929-1937

### **Cedar Grove High School**

Principal	Kenneth Hyink	1937-1943
Principal	Leslie Stovall	1943-1945
Principal	Earl Witte	1945-1955
Principal	Oliver Berge	1955-1963
Principal	Charles Bingner	1963-1965
Principal	Patrick Baggot	1965-1985
Principal	Ronald Sternard	1985-1996
Principal	John Hocking	1996-Present
Superintendent	Charles Bingner	1965-1971
Superintendent	Kenneth Glewen	1971-1984
Superintendent	Mary Bowden	1984-1990
Superintendent	Ken Ripple	1990
Superintendent	Roger Klumb	1990-Present

## - Chapter Six - Postal Service

By David Arthur Neese, Postmaster

One of the great joys in life is receiving a personal card or letter from family or friends. Even in 1997 with technology such as e-Mail and fax machines, a personal note marking a birthday, graduation, marriage or anniversary is met with eager anticipation. I am continually reminded of the caring nature of Cedar Grove area residents whenever a great volume of cards arrives for a patron who has either suffered a loss or celebrated a life-changing event.

The joy we experience in receiving a card or letter today was probably magnified ten-fold in 1849 when Cedar Grove received its first post office. Here were settlers in a new country, thousands of miles from their places of birth trying to start a new life in the wilderness. No telephone or telegraph existed to connect them to the rest of their family far away, and no airplane could return them home in a day. In fact, the only contact our Dutch ancestors in Cedar Grove and Amsterdam had with the outside world was via the mail service or an occasional newspaper. For these reasons the importance of having a post office in or near Cedar Grove could not be overstated.

In the mid-1800s the United States Post Office Department was quick to establish postal service wherever it was requested. At that time individuals were recommended for the local postmaster position by their senator or congressman with an official presidential nomination and Senate confirmation following. It was usually in the best interest of a representative to recommend someone local for the position, someone who knew the community and perhaps even ran a small business there. This type of appointee generally reflected well upon the representative which

is what he desired for his next election. The main drawback to this selection process was that any time a new political party won power in Washington, D.C., massive changes in postal service employment occurred. This basic system is why so many different postmasters served Cedar Grove in its early years. While some changes in the selection process occurred over the years (eventually the Postmaster General made appointments to smaller post offices), it was still very political in nature until 1970 when the Postal Reform Act made the postal service less dependent on tax dollars and government control.

### **Cedar Grove's First Post Office**

In 1825 before there was a settlement in Cedar Grove, mail was carried by foot between Green Bay and Chicago on the old Green Bay Trail. The distance was over 200 miles between these two locations, and it took a month to complete the round trip. The pay was approximately sixty dollars for this delivery service, and the official load was limited to sixty pounds. The new Green Bay Military Road which is now State Highway 32, was completed in 1839, and by 1840 the trip from Green Bay to Chicago was being made on horseback.

When Reverend Pieter Zonne reached this area in the fall of 1847 with his group of settlers from the Netherlands, he built a log home on the north end of what is now Cedar Grove. Conversely, the first designated "mail repository" was located on the south end of the settlement in a log cabin owned by Sweezy Burr. Even before the official establishment of a post office in a community, it was necessary to have a central location for people to pick up whatever letters or packages had arrived for them. This practice apparently dated as far back as 1639 when the General Court of Massachusetts designated Richard Fairbanks' tavern in Boston as the official repository for mail arriving from or being sent overseas. Sweezy Burr's log house served as this area's repository as early as 1848, and on January 27, 1849, it was officially established as Cedar Grove's first post office.

Sweezy Burr's simple log cabin is a well-known relic of Cedar Grove folklore. In 1902, a picture of the cabin was submitted to the *Milwaukee Sentinel* for inclusion in the newspaper's annual photo contest. The photo featured then-current occupants Peter



Cedar Grove's First Post Office Building with Then-Residents Peter and Adrianna Huisheere  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

and Adrianna Huisheere, though many insist erroneously that the people on the photo are Mr. and Mrs. Sweezy Burr. In later years the now-famous photo began to appear on postcards and in postal and county histories.

Sweezy Burr's log house was located on what is now County Road LLL, on the southern edge of the village. The reason the post office was located on the south side of town is because another settlement was beginning along the shores of Lake Michigan at about the time Cedar Grove's first post office was being established. That settlement which went on to become the Village of Amsterdam was approximately one mile due east of Sweezy Burr's log home. By situating the Cedar Grove Post Office in its south-side location, it could serve both communities more efficiently.

Two rather important events are believed to have occurred at Burr's log cabin, one before the building officially became a post office and one after. In the first instance, the Rev. Pieter Zonne is said to have been standing in the doorway of the Burr residence shortly after the settlement was established. Impressed with the large number of cedar trees growing nearby, he suggested that the

settlement be called Cedar Grove. The second event occurred shortly after the Town of Holland was established in 1849. The post office became the township's first polling place, dutifully recording a total of 65 votes cast in the election of town board members.

Sometime during the late 1800s the Burr residence, which had served as the first post office in Cedar Grove, was placed on skids and moved by oxen onto Peter Huisheere's land on the east side of Main Street just south of the Walvoord Cemetery. During the early 1900s, the building was moved to the Abram Ramaker farm. The log cabin was torn down shortly after the end of World War I.

### **Early Days in the Cedar Grove Post Office**

In the last half of the nineteenth century, the Cedar Grove Post Office was a bustling hub of activity. It served as a meeting place for friends and neighbors to exchange information received through letters and newspapers. It gave business people a place to discuss their trades and seal agreements. It was also a place for political leaders to share ideas on how the township and village could best be served, and it gave farmers a chance to socialize and swap stories. Our Dutch ancestors worked hard on their 40-80 acre farms and a trip to the post office was something they looked forward to.

Because of the many hours people worked and the travel involved, a trip to the post office was usually limited to two or three times a week. In 1947, Cedar Grove's then-oldest resident Mrs. Delia (John W.) Schreurs stated that a trip to Sheboygan in the 1870s from their home south of Oostburg:

*...was a day's journey through the woods with a yoke of oxen, while the only means of getting mail was to go to the nearest post office at Cedar Grove seven miles away.*

### **The First "Dutch" Postmaster**

When Abraham Lincoln, who was a Republican, was elected president in 1860, it represented a change in political power in Washington, D.C. With the patronage system that controlled the postal service at that time, it also meant that Cedar Grove would get a new postmaster. In 1861, after Lincoln's inauguration, Gerrit H. Kolste became Cedar Grove's third postmaster, replac-

ing John R. Muller who had served in the position while Democrats controlled the White House from 1853-1861.

Gerrit Kolste was a prominent settler and promoter in the Town of Holland. His accomplishments include purchase of the present site of the Village of Cedar Grove from the United States Government in 1846. He had arrived in this area approximately one year ahead of the Pieter Zonne contingent and kept prospective settlers informed of everything from weather conditions to the price of land in the area.

Like most early postmasters, Kolste held down additional jobs as well as working for the postal service. In addition to running a farm, he operated a general store in the post office building which by the late 1860s was no longer the Burr cabin. In a move that indicated his shrewdness, Kolste purchased Lot One of Block Two of the original plat of Cedar Grove and built a structure there. This post office site was on the west side of Main Street, slightly south of the present intersection of Main Street and Wisconsin Avenue. Kolste figured, quite correctly, that this property would increase in value because the Milwaukee, Lakeshore & Western Railroad was planning on laying tracks in that vicinity.

At the new location, Kolste not only ran the post office but also collected rent from the government since he owned the building. This was apparently not at all unusual. Villagers would often enthusiastically volunteer to house the post office in their house or business. If after a few years a building's owner received a more lucrative offer for the use of his structure, the post office was evicted. In these instances both a new post office and a new postmaster usually had to be found. If a new location could not be provided, a village could lose its post office. Cedar Grove apparently never had this problem since a new location always seemed to be available. Over the years the local post office has occupied at least seven different buildings at seven different locations.

### **The Railroad Comes to Town**

The United States Post Office Department was always looking for faster ways to move the mail. The postal service found a great alternative in the iron horse compared to the former use of steamboats and stagecoaches to transport mail. From 1845 to 1875 the nation's rail system grew to include over 70,000 miles of mail



routes. The Milwaukee, Lakeshore & Western Railroad began service through Cedar Grove in late 1872 bringing rapid growth to the village. With Gerrit Kolste's foresight, Cedar Grove's new post office was ideally located to take advantage of this new mode of transportation. After a spirited battle between the north and south sides of the village, the new railroad depot was built in approximately the center of town, very near the post office.

The railroad dramatically improved mail service from one part of the country to another. To get away from the risky exchange of mail by hand from a slow-moving train, special pouch catchers and track-side mail cranes were tried during the early years of rail service. By the time the Cedar Grove railroad depot opened, the perfected Ward Catcher System allowed "on the fly" mail exchange between the railroad station and speeding trains. Similar systems were used for many years to come. Earl Meinen and Al Risseeuw both remember times when a mail bag missed a not-so-perfect catcher system and fell under the wheels of a train, sending Cedar Grove's mail and papers flying throughout the village. Luckily, these incidents were few and far between.

The mail was taken to and from the railroad station catcher by a "Special Mail Messenger." The messenger's job was to hang the outgoing mail pouch on the catcher system so that it could be caught on the fly by a passing train and to retrieve the mail that was left by the same train.

### **Rural Free Delivery Arrives**

The Post Office Department's Rural Free Delivery (RFD) service began on October 1, 1896 when Postmaster General William L. Wilson introduced the service on three routes in his home state of West Virginia. He then selected an additional forty-one routes including Sun Prairie, Wisconsin, to begin on December 1, 1896. By 1900 there were 1,212 routes serving over 879,000 people throughout the nation. With this new service, people living in rural areas no longer had to pick up their mail at a village or city post office.

To apply for rural delivery in the early 1900s, at least 100 families along the proposed route had to sign a petition. This petition was then forwarded to the district's congressional representative in Washington, D.C. If the request was thought to have merit, the





Hank Huibregtse with the Horse and Buggy Used for His Rural Mail Route  
(Photo Courtesy Marguerite Neerhof and Ethel DeMuz)

Post Office Department sent out a special representative to map the route. Cedar Grove's petition for rural free delivery service was submitted by Postmaster Adrian Fontaine in approximately 1914, but it was not approved until after William DeSmidt became postmaster in early 1915. Rural free delivery service to Cedar Grove area patrons began in the spring of 1915. A total of 119 mail boxes served 126 rural Cedar Grove families in 1916 according to postal carrier Henry Huibregtse's route directory for that year. In 1917 a postal clerk was hired by the Cedar Grove Post Office to help sort mail for the new rural route.

By the time rural free delivery service had reached the Cedar Grove area, the Post Office Department had approved parcel post service for rural patrons as well. This meant that area farm families could order from Sears & Roebuck or any other mail order catalog and have the order delivered directly to them through the postal service.

When rural free delivery service started throughout the nation, carriers were paid a salary of fifty dollars per month. Out of that salary, the postal carrier had to pay for his horse-drawn cart as well as for food, shoes, and veterinary service for his horse. Some

rural carriers would supplement their postal service income by running other businesses from their horse-drawn carts. As James Bruns pointed out in his book *Mail on the Move*, one enterprising mail carrier in New Hampshire gave out cards boasting of "Laundry collected Monday, returned Saturday."

Rural mail carriers were subject to the same system of political spoils as their postmaster counterparts. Recently-retired Lamont Lukens, who handled Cedar Grove's Rural Route 1 from 1968-1996, had to meet with a leading Sheboygan County Democrat before receiving the carrier position. The Sheboygan County official then submitted Lamont's name to some leading Democrats in Milwaukee who agreed that Lamont was a satisfactory candidate for the job.

Another service that was available to both village and rural patrons in the early 1900s was "special delivery." For many years, a messenger was hired to transport special delivery letters directly to the doors of patrons. The Cedar Grove Post Office handled fifteen to twenty-five such deliveries per postal quarter in 1918, and the messenger was paid eight cents per letter delivered. Priority Mail and improvements in first-class delivery service have made the original special delivery service a thing of the past.

The Cedar Grove Post Office's rural deliveries increased from just 119 when the service started in 1916 to nearly 800 by 1993. The volume of mail per delivery had also skyrocketed during that same time period. As a result, a top priority after becoming Cedar Grove's new postmaster in 1993 was to provide a second rural route for this area. The second route was quickly approved and officially began on July 9, 1993. Since deliveries no longer have to be made by a single rural carrier, patrons on both routes receive their mail earlier in the day.

### **Postal Rates**

I know from personal experience that the price of postage stamps is an item of great concern to the citizens of Cedar Grove, especially when there is a rate increase. It may interest readers to know that before 1845 it cost six cents to mail a single sheet of paper just thirty miles, and it cost twenty-five cents to mail the same item over 400 miles. In 1845 a new law reduced the price of postage to five cents for all distances under 300 miles and ten

cents for greater distances based on a half-ounce weight. In 1847 the first postage stamps were issued in five-cent and ten-cent denominations, and the modern system of postal administration began.

In 1851 the price of postage for letters was reduced again, this time to a uniform price of three cents per half-ounce regardless of destination. By 1885 postal rates had dropped to just two cents per first-ounce mailed. Postal rates remained somewhat constant from the late 1800s through the mid-1900s. This can probably be attributed to continued improvements in methods of transporting mail. Continuous improvements in rail service, air travel, and highway travel helped offset factors that would have otherwise resulted in increased operating costs during that period of time. While postal rates have increased more during the last half of the twentieth century, one must realize that the United States Postal Service is now an independent agency that no longer receives tax dollars to help fund its operations. Also, changes in postal rates over the last twenty years basically reflect changes in the nation's consumer price index which increased dramatically during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

A summary of postal rates over the past century is as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Cost/First Ounce</u>
1885	two cents
1917	three cents
1919	two cents
1932	three cents
1958	four cents
1963	five cents
1968	six cents
1971	eight cents
1974	ten cents
1975	thirteen cents
1978	fifteen cents
1981	twenty cents
1985	twenty-two cents
1988	twenty-five cents
1991	twenty-nine cents
1995	thirty-two cents

## **Zip Codes**

Over the years the postal service has seen a dramatic change in the type and volume of mail being delivered. In its early years, most of the mail handled by a local post office was correspondence between family and friends. Since that time, however, business mail has increased dramatically to the point where it now represents over eighty percent of all correspondence handled by the postal service. By 1963 the great volume of items being handled by the postal service was resulting in backlogs at a number of post offices. To help improve mail service, the now-familiar five-digit zip-code system was introduced on July 1, 1963.

The ultimate value of the new zip-code system was that clerks no longer had to read poorly written, often undecipherable names of cities on addressed envelopes. The new system also made automated mail sorting a possibility.

## **Post Office Locations**

The first official post office in Cedar Grove was the log cabin of Sweezy Burr along the present County Road LLL. The post office was apparently located on the south end of the village so that it could serve both the Cedar Grove area and another very young settlement which later became the Village of Amsterdam.

The second known post office was on Lot One of Block Two of the original plat of Cedar Grove. The post office, which was built in the late 1860s, appears to have been located on the far north end of the present Co-operative Exchange parking lot, adjacent to the railroad right-of way. This post office, next door to a hotel operated by John VanAltena, was originally owned by Gerrit Kolste who served as postmaster from 1861 until 1872. No photographs of this post office are available.

In 1895 then-postmaster August Schiereck apparently moved the post office to another location near the railroad tracks. This fact was documented in a letter informing patrons of the impending move, but no photographs of this post office have been found to date.

In approximately 1905, the post office moved from its site near the railroad depot to the north end of town. That post office was in a building just south of a general store which later became



Cedar Grove's North-Side Post Office, Adjacent to Huenink Brothers Store in the Early 1900's  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

the Corner Store on the southeast corner of Main Street and Union Avenue.

In 1916 the Cedar Grove Post Office moved back near the

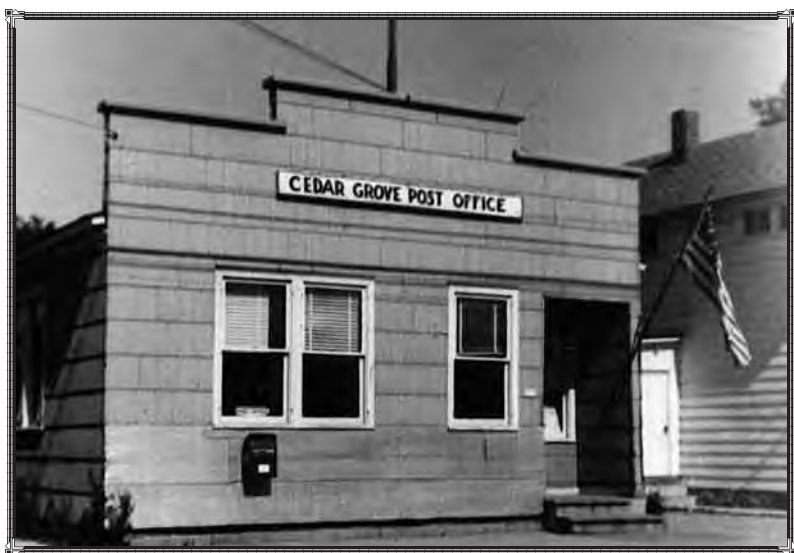


Cedar Grove Post Office Adjacent to the Cedar Grove State Bank  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

## Chapter 6

intersection of Main Street and Wisconsin Avenue on the west side of the street just south of the present Claerbout Furniture Store (which at that time served as the Cedar Grove State Bank). By 1924 a new Cedar Grove State Bank building was constructed on the site of the present National Exchange Bank, and a larger post office was built two lots north of the bank. John Potts' dry goods store, which later became VandeWall's Grocery, stood between the new bank and post office. This post office building stood until the mid-1980s when it was razed along with several other old buildings to make room for the Cedar Grove Clinic.

By 1960 it became obvious that Cedar Grove needed a larger, more modern post office. Construction bids were requested in October of 1960 shortly after the project was approved, and work began on the new post office in April of 1961. Although much of the interior work was done by local craftsmen, the general contractor for the project was E. T. Schreiber of Minneapolis, who became the lease-holder as well. The Cedar Grove post office on the corner of First Street and Wisconsin Avenue has been in that same building for over thirty-five years. At the time it first opened for business in December of 1961, the post office served 360 box holders and 300 rural route patrons. As of 1997 the same



Cedar Grove Post Office Built in the Early 1920s  
(Photo Courtesy David Nesse)

building serves 435 box holders and nearly 800 rural route customers.

### **Cedar Grove's Postmasters**

Over twenty different postmasters have served this area since Cedar Grove received its first post office in 1849. A chronological listing of those who served in the position includes:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>Appointed</u>
Sweezy Burr	Postmaster	1849
John R. Muller	Postmaster	1853
Gerrit H. Kolste	Postmaster	1861
Abraham L. Monteba	Postmaster	1872
Cornelius Prinsen	Postmaster	1874
Edward Stronks	Postmaster	1882
Gerrett Lammers	Postmaster	1886
Gerrett Stronks	Postmaster	1889
August H. Schiereck	Postmaster	1893
John DeMaster	Postmaster	1897
John B. Huenink	Acting Postmaster	1904
Adrian Fonteine	Postmaster	1904
William A. DeSmidt	Postmaster	1915
Henry W. Lemmenes	Postmaster	1921
Joseph K. Hesselink	Postmaster	1935
Clayton B. Hesselink	Acting Postmaster	1951
Clayton B. Hesselink	Postmaster	1952
Leland J. Meylink	Acting Postmaster	1963
Leland J. Meylink	Postmaster	1965
Mrs. Mary J. Voskuil	Officer-In-Charge	1977
Mrs. Mary J. Voskuil	Postmaster	1977
Leo F. Bauer	Officer-In-Charge	1978
William Soerens	Postmaster	1979
Kathleen S. Keller	Officer-In-Charge	1992
David A. Neese	Postmaster	1993

### **Present Post Office Staff**

I officially became Cedar Grove's postmaster on January 23, 1993. In a way, I continue the Dutch tradition that characterized



so many of Cedar Grove's previous postmasters. My great-great-grandfather on my mother's side, Theodorickus Heines Koning, settled in Amsterdam, Wisconsin in 1854 and married Jenny Oosterhouse there in 1856. For many years they lived on State Highway 32 across from the Presbyterian Cemetery. At one time a school was located on their land and a Presbyterian Church was located just across the road from their farm house.

My great-grandfather, August Neese, worked for the German Postal Service before immigrating to the United States in 1890. My father, Harold Henry Neese, was a mail carrier in the City of Sheboygan for forty years. He spent the last thirty-two years of his postal service on the same route and got to know everyone as if they were family, including their cats and dogs.

I began my postal career as a clerk in the Sheboygan, Wisconsin Post Office in April of 1985, but I also worked as a distribution, dispatch and finance clerk, and as an acting supervisor, during my years there. My first postmaster assignment came in December of 1991 when I was named postmaster of Genoa City, Wisconsin. When Bill Soerens retired as postmaster in Cedar Grove, I requested a lateral transfer back to this area to be closer to my family, friends, church, and band activities.

Our post office staff includes postal clerks Linda Huibregtse and Bonnie TenHaken, rural route mail carriers Eugene Damkot and David Schmitt, and rural route substitute Noreen Hoak. I am not exaggerating when I say that these are the finest co-workers I have ever had the pleasure of knowing. They are knowledgeable, concerned, and caring, plus they all have a great sense of humor. And where else does the rural mail carrier bring everything from breakfast to pies and pizza for the postmaster and his staff?



## -Chapter Seven-

# Railroad and Streetcar Service

Excerpts from a Book Being Written By Peter Fetterer

### Railroad Service

**T**he railroad has been an integral part of the Village of Cedar Grove for over 125 years. With its tracks running through the center of town, and its trains slicing across Main Street at all hours of the day and night, how could it be anything less. The first steam locomotive reached Cedar Grove in May of 1872. It was most likely part of a construction train delivering ties, spikes, and rails to section crews as they worked their way southward building a new railroad from Manitowoc to Milwaukee. Work on the line had started in Sheboygan just eight months earlier.

By December of 1872, the track work was completed, and on January 2, 1873, the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railroad began regular service between Sheboygan and Milwaukee. Cedar Grove was a scheduled stop on the new line. Other stations along the route included Oostburg, Wilson, and Weedens to the north, and Belgium, Deckers, Port Washington, Vilas, Mequon, Dillmans, and Whitefish Bay to the south. The run from Sheboygan to Milwaukee took over three hours, and the fare was two dollars.

Once Cedar Grove had a railroad, it needed a depot. In Gustave Buchen's *Historic Sheboygan County*, he writes that "...a lively controversy sprang up between the north and south ends [of the village] as to where the depot would be located." Buchen then went on to say..."The south-enders won out." In reality the depot was built in the approximate center of the village, exactly where the railroad wanted it.

A detailed history of Cedar Grove's several depots is lacking.



Railroad Depot and Village Hall in the Early 1900s  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

It is known, however, that the railroad purchased property north of the Main Street crossing when it originally bought land for its right-of-way. It is very likely that the first depot was built there. By the summer of 1874, other structures located along the tracks near the depot included a 35-foot by 45-foot grain elevator built by Garret Lammers, a warehouse for fish, produce, plaster, salt and feed owned by Gilbert Smith and a boarding house and saloon constructed by a Mr. VanAltena and leased to a Mr. Fuller. The Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western Railroad purchased an additional two acres of land to expand its station grounds in 1881.

To accommodate several early grain elevators and warehouses within the village, the railroad track included a long siding that began behind the Walvoord Cemetery, paralleled the main line, and then joined the main track again at a point north of the depot. When the Wisconsin Foundry and Steel Works opened in Cedar Grove in about 1900, the railroad extended a siding to its plant as well. Another siding was eventually constructed north of the depot to reach the Dutch Canning and Pickling Company which started in 1907.

In June of 1924, an explosion at the depot did considerable damage to the building. By 1927 Cedar Grove "was on its third depot," according to a *Sheboygan Press* article, but the paper did

not elaborate or further discuss the village's previous two depots.

William Sweemer might have been Cedar Grove's most enterprising station agent. Back in 1879 he served as depot master, telegraph operator, and express agent for the railroad while also operating a grain elevator just across the tracks where he could keep an eye on business. Long-time village residents might still recall Chicago & North Western station agents Philo Johnson, Richard Ramaker, and Paul Wilke. Wilke served from 1936 until early 1959 when the Chicago & North Western Railroad closed many of its depots including Cedar Grove's. The depot building was eventually torn down, and DeVisch windmill now stands on that site.

Crime affected the local railroad depot on two separate occasions. In the first incident, which took place in the autumn of 1902, the perpetrators were never caught, but we do know that none of them was nicknamed "Stealth." The thieves first broke into a tool house near the depot and stole a sledge hammer. They then hammered their way through the front windows of the depot and placed a charge of dynamite on the safe to blow it open. An October 4, 1902 article in the *Sheboygan Telegram* stated:

*It is supposed that the intruders expected to be handsomely rewarded on account of its being the first of the month, but they received the trifling sum of \$1.50 for their troubles. Not being satisfied with this they opened express packages but nothing of great value was gotten.*

The second recorded incident took place in approximately 1918 when a lone bandit entered the depot through a window and made off with sixteen cents and a revolver. One or two days later, a police constable in Sheboygan spotted "a suspicious character" walking north along the railroad tracks. Questioning produced the revolver and a confession, and the thief was sentenced to ninety days on the rockpile in lieu of a fifty dollar fine plus costs.

Passenger train service through Cedar Grove, which began with one train in each direction daily, expanded to two trains each way when the Lake Shore line opened to Manitowoc in September of 1873. Passenger service increased to three trains in each direction by the end of 1874.

The Chicago & North Western Railroad took control of the Milwaukee, Lake Shore & Western line in 1893. By the early 1900s rail service had expanded to the point where as many as twelve passenger trains and passenger-carrying freight trains traveled through Cedar Grove each day. Some trains, like the Ashland Limited, did not stop. Others stopped briefly if passengers wanted to either board or exit the train.

According to a September 24, 1955, Chicago & North Western timetable, eight passenger trains still ran through the Village of Cedar Grove daily (except Sunday) at that time. Only two of these trains stopped at the Cedar Grove depot. The two passenger trains that stopped were the No. 317 northbound at 5:26 a.m. and the No. 306 southbound at 8:15 a.m. A steam locomotive was generally on the lead of No. 306 between Green Bay and Milwaukee. The northbound Flambeau 400 and Shoreland 400 streamliners stopped only to discharge passengers from Milwaukee and beyond. The No. 120, another steamer, would stop southbound only if necessary. On Sundays Cedar Grove was a flagstop for the southbound Shoreland 400.

Daily passenger service on the line ended in June of 1970. After that, passenger trains ran only on Sundays. The last regularly scheduled passenger train ran south through Cedar Grove on Sunday evening, April 25, 1971.

Large fires devastated parts of Cedar Grove's business district in 1929 and 1957, and the railroad played a major role in each incident. On Feb. 1, 1929, fire spread from the Eagle Grocery and Shoe Company's basement to the Co-op Exchange elevator, VanderLaan's Hardware Store, and an adjoining tinsmith shop along the west side of Main Street south of the railroad crossing. Hundreds of firefighters rushed to the scene, but Cedar Grove had no water tower or municipal water system at the time. There was little the firefighters could do except form a bucket brigade to transport water from nearby wells. As the fire progressed, an urgent call was made to Sheboygan requesting a locomotive to move boxcars away from the flames. The switch engine and crew that responded not only moved the cars but also supplied the firefighters with water from its tender, an action that proved instrumental in stemming the fire's further advance.

The railroad was much more involved in the 1957 conflagra-

tion. In that incident a northbound freight train collided with a fuel oil truck at the Blank Avenue crossing just west of Main Street. This touched off a spectacular fire that damaged the Co-op, the Cedar Grove Meat Market, and numerous train cars. Fortunately no one was seriously injured.

The series of events that led to the 1957 fire started when a tank truck loaded with 6,000 gallons of fuel oil backed westward across the railroad tracks to enter the Co-op's fuel-storage "tank farm." Before the tank truck could completely clear the track, a northbound freight train slammed into the truck's trailer and tossed it off the tracks to the west right next to the tank farm. The freight train's locomotive then pushed the cab of the truck another 100 feet up the line before dumping it on the east side of the tracks behind the meat market. The truck's cab and trailer both exploded, spewing flames in all directions.

When the train finally came to a stop, its locomotive had reached the depot north of the Main Street crossing. That left several train cars and the caboose right next to the burning tank truck. Firemen prevented flames from reaching the tank farm and cooled down another tank car near the end of the train, thus saving the village from what might have been catastrophic explosions. In addition to the damage to several Main Street buildings, the fire destroyed the train's caboose and a boxcar on the Co-op's side-track. Several additional train cars were scorched as well.

Over the years local railroad crossings have been the scenes of numerous other serious accidents as well. One of the first recorded railroad crossing accidents took place in 1878 when a ballast train hit a farmer's milk wagon. Fortunately no one was seriously injured in that mishap. On a far more serious note, three area businessmen were fatally injured when a northbound train slammed into their horse-drawn carriage as it crossed the railroad tracks near the Cedar Grove depot in early September of 1899. The accident's victims included August Schiereck, 48, who was involved in several local business ventures; Nicholas Fox, 30, a blacksmith; and William Holle, 60, a tinsmith. Albert Eiche, 40, a wagonmaker, was also seriously injured in the accident, but he eventually did recover. The men that passed away left behind two widows and 14 children.

On February 20, 1978, village residents along the east side of

Main Street awoke to find railroad cars scattered across their back yards. Fifteen cars of a northbound freight train jumped the tracks in the early morning darkness and tore up 300 feet of right-of-way as well as trees, shrubs, and lawns on adjacent private property. Railroad officials blamed the wreck on a train car that apparently derailed south of town and then bounced along the railroad ties until it hit a track-switch just north of the Main Street crossing. As a result of the derailment, a portion of Main Street was closed until mid-morning, and the rail line was closed until the damaged cars were moved and new ties and rails were set in place.

### **Interurban Streetcar Service**

A new form of inter-city passenger service came to Cedar Grove in 1908 with the arrival of the Milwaukee Northern Electric Railway. Fast, comfortable cars and frequent service made the Milwaukee Northern's interurban line a formidable competitor to the Chicago & North Western passenger trains. Cedar Grove residents were quick to take advantage of the new electric line.

The Milwaukee Northern's line paralleled the Chicago & North Western's tracks for much of the distance between Port Washington and Sheboygan. Town of Holland officials were initially reluctant to grant the interurban line permission to cross town roads and buy property for a right-of-way. Eventually, however, with assurances that crossings would be properly maintained and that property owners would be fairly compensated, town officials withdrew their protest.

To build the new line, the Milwaukee Northern borrowed small steam engines and a steam shovel from the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul Railroad and recruited hundreds of laborers and teams of draft horses from farms and communities along the proposed line. Swamps north and south of Cedar Grove slowed construction considerably. Sinkholes kept swallowing large sections of the new right-of-way, a condition that kept motormen on alert and section crews on overtime for many years after the line opened.

The Milwaukee Northern's tracks swung away from the Chicago & North Western line at a point south of the Walvoord



Cedar Grove's Milwaukee Northern Streetcar Depot During the Early 1900s  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

Cemetery and headed northeast through the village. The line crossed Main Street between Maple and Cherry Avenues. The depot for interurban passengers, which was already under construction by the end of May in 1908, was located just north of the Main Street crossing on the east side of the street. The original depot building still exists and is presently used as a private residence.

A 1916 plat map of Cedar Grove shows a "Y" in the track plan at a point south of the Walvoord Cemetery. This "Y" allowed cars to be turned around and made it easier to spot cars for freight shipments. The Milwaukee Northern also had a siding just south of Union Avenue to serve a creamery (which eventually became Gilt Edge Foundry), according to the 1916 plat map.

The first Milwaukee Northern cars arrived in Cedar Grove on August 31, 1908. According to an article in the September 5, 1908 edition of the *Plymouth Reporter*:

*Monday was a gala day for this village, as the arrival of the first interurban car was witnessed between 1 and 2 p.m. It carried about 150 merchants from Port Washington including Zimmerman's band from that place. They then paraded the streets and afterwards to the village hall, where they were addressed by our village president, A. Stokdyk Sr., which was fol-*



*lowed by an address by Mayor Bolens of Port Washington. F.W. Walker, president of the Milwaukee Northern, then thanked the citizens for their help and also spoke on the benefits this will mean for the people. Judge Bolens of Port Washington also gave a brief address, which was followed by J. Jungers of this place. On the way about \$150.00 was collected from the "Port" people, which was spent in the village, making a happy day to all, at least some were exceedingly happy. They left for their respective homes about 4 o'clock. Regular services were begun the following day. Cars however only run every 2 hours for a few weeks, on account of the gravel cars taking their road.*

By the time interurban service reached Cedar Grove, towns like Riverside (Kohler), Sheboygan Falls, and Plymouth already had their own streetcar line, and service to Elkhart Lake was just a few months away. The interurban line that passed through Cedar Grove included service north to Sheboygan by September 23, 1908.

Even before interurban service reached Cedar Grove, area farmers were enticed to investigate use of the line by an article in the *Sheboygan Press*. That article discussed a new interurban milk car that could be used to transport milk from rural farms to dairies in neighboring cities. The new milk car, which was invented by a Milwaukee Northern engineer, was designed to cool milk and keep it at a low temperature without the use of ice or chemicals. The car was fifty-three feet long and had a capacity of 255 milk cans. The Kleinhesselink Brothers were apparently the first to ship milk from Cedar Grove on the interurban line, but their shipment of cans went by conventional cars rather than on the Milwaukee Northern's new milk car.

In addition to the early shipment of milk on the interurban line, there were many other firsts of significant interest as well:

1. Some of the first passengers to ride on the interurban line were baseball fans from Cedar Grove who were on their way to Belgium to root for their team. Their unofficial excursion took place a month before the line actually opened, so they had to ride to Belgium on loaded ballast cars. At that time the Milwaukee Northern was hauling ballast from a gravel pit owned by Garret Lammers and Peter Huisheere, Jr.



2. One of the first excursions after the line officially opened was made by the Chicago & North Western section crew from Cedar Grove. They "enjoyed themselves by taking a trip to Milwaukee on the interurban car Sunday," according to a newspaper article. Today we would call their trip "checking out the competition."
3. The first electric substation that was built in Cedar Grove was destroyed by fire before the electric line ever reached Sheboygan. Vital to the Milwaukee Northern's business, the substation was quickly rebuilt.
4. A track added to the line in front of the interurban depot before the end of 1908 was the first passing track in the village. The passing track allowed other northbound or southbound interurban cars to pass a car that was stopped at the depot.
5. The first area resident to be hit by an interurban car might have been Victor Weinrich. He and an interurban car collided in Oostburg on Thanksgiving Day in 1908.
6. The Northern Grain Elevator was one of the first area businesses to buy electricity from the Milwaukee Northern. Wynveen and Meeng's Blacksmith Shop also electrified in early 1909.

In 1910 "Limited" trains on the interurban line completed the trip from Sheboygan to Milwaukee in two hours and five minutes. These trains, which provided shorter travel times for commuters, had a limited number of stops along their routes. The first daily car left the station at the corner of 8th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue in Sheboygan at 7:12 a.m. Other cars followed at two-hour intervals with the last car leaving at 7:12 p.m. It took thirty-two minutes for the interurban to travel from Sheboygan to Cedar Grove and then took another ninety-three minutes to arrive at the station on the corner of 5th and Wells in Milwaukee.

"Local" trains, which stopped at crossroads and loading platforms all along the route, typically made the trip from Sheboygan to Milwaukee in two hours and thirty-five minutes. These interurbans left Sheboygan every two hours between 7:42 a.m. and 9:42 p.m.

The Milwaukee Northern's last train out of Milwaukee each

night was affectionately known as the "Owl" car. It was especially popular on weekends when area residents traveled south to partake of big city entertainment. The car came through Cedar Grove shortly before 1:00 a.m. and arrived in Sheboygan at 1:29 a.m. The Chicago & North Western Railroad offered its own version of the Owl car. Its Saturday night freight train that left Milwaukee at 1:30 a.m. allowed passengers to ride in the caboose as they traveled back to Cedar Grove and other communities along the route.

More than 883,000 passengers rode the interurban line in 1910. The Milwaukee Northern also transported Gutsch Brewery beer, produce grown by area farmers, and other freight between Milwaukee and Sheboygan.

The interurban line made history when in June of 1910 two cars from Chicago passed through Cedar Grove on their way to Elkhart Lake to demonstrate the possibility of long-distance travel via interconnected electric lines. There was a time in Cedar Grove's history when residents could board an interurban car at the village depot and travel almost all the way to New York City by transferring from one interurban line to another.

The Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Co. bought the Milwaukee Northern interurban line for six-million dollars in 1922. One of the changes Cedar Grove residents noticed almost immediately was that the Limited trains on the interurban line no longer stopped at their depot. Port Washington was the Limited's only scheduled stop between Sheboygan and Milwaukee. All other stations were flag stops only.

As had occurred with railroad service over the years, the interurban line was involved in several tragic accidents as well. In one such incident village resident John Cole was fatally injured by an interurban freighter in December of 1925. Cole, who was a member of the interurban's section crew working out of Cedar Grove, was clearing snow from crossings and platforms near Stop No. 47 about one mile south of Weeden Station. A passing Chicago & North Western freight train, on tracks that paralleled the interurban line, is believed to have distracted Cole, and he failed to hear the interurban approaching. At the same time, smoke from the train's steam locomotive obscured the vision of the interurban's motorman, and he failed to see Cole

standing on the tracks.

One interesting historical note relating to the interurban line had to do with a strike against The Milwaukee Electric Railway in 1934. During that strike the Cedar Grove substation, which had been modernized in 1929 and was very important to the interurban line, received special protection from the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department. While the interurban line curtailed passenger service during the strike, it kept freight trains running.

On April 4, 1940, the *Sheboygan Press* reported that The Milwaukee Electric Railway & Light Co. had petitioned the Wisconsin Public Service Commission for approval to close the Port Washington-to-Sheboygan portion of its electric line and replace that portion of its service with busses. The company told the Public Service Commission that it had lost \$65,000 in 1939, and that the interurban line needed more than \$125,000 worth of repairs. The state quickly approved the abandonment request. On Sunday, September 22, 1940, the last Milwaukee-bound interurban car left Sheboygan at 11:00 p.m. About thirty minutes later the interurban rolled through Cedar Grove and disappeared forever into the night.

As promised, bus service began the very next day. Eight buses initially served patrons of the old interurban line, but that number was soon reduced as more and more people relied on private transportation for their travel needs.

The last known interurban car in Sheboygan County did not leave the area until 1992. That year Car No. 26 of the Sheboygan Light, Power & Railway Company was moved from lakefront property east of Cedar Grove to the East Troy Electric Railroad Museum. The car, which had served as a summer cottage for the Doedens family until the late 1980s, was in excellent condition at the time it was moved. It still had its original arched stained glass windows, electric lights, leather grab straps, rolling destination signs, and fare box.

## - Chapter Eight -

### Commercial Fishing

By Shirley Stokdyk Sager

One rare, warm April afternoon while putting together the weekly *Villager* in our Cedar Grove office, I was pleasantly surprised by a visit from Eli Kolste, a former Cedar Grove resident who then lived in Milwaukee. Eli often stopped by to drop off an old picture or some other interesting bit of history, but on this particular day he simply wanted to talk about the 1920s when he worked for my great-uncle, Adolph Stokdyk, Sr. Mr. Stokdyk was part owner of a local foundry but was also involved in boat building and fishing at Amsterdam with his sons Jim, who was also known as “Boyd,” and Adolph, Jr.

Eli started his remembrances with fishing tales from years gone by. As he recalled, this was the time of year when local fisheries would be in the midst of preparations for the upcoming fishing season. During the 1920s a line of fisheries stretched from the present Terry Andrae State Park south to Amsterdam. One of the first orders of business each spring was to prepare the nets for the approaching season. Anchor lines and tie lines were made so that the nets could be attached to pilings set in the lake.

The next order of business was to drive the pilings that were needed to set the fishing nets at depths ranging from forty to ninety feet. The fishermen typically drove twenty-five to thirty pilings for each net that was set. Pilings for the deeper nets were often spliced and could measure up to one hundred feet in length. The large pile driver, which was used to pound the pilings into the lake floor, needed a building of its own for storage because of its unusual height at one end. This type of building was only found along the shores of Lake Michigan and was a favorite subject of area artists and photographers for many years.



Pile-Driver House at the End of the Present Smies Road During the Mid-1930s  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)



Bringing Fresh Fish into the Shanty and Ice House  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

The fishermen had to wait for calm waters, with no violent pitching or rolling waves. Eli recalled that the time of setting nets at the forty-foot depth was usually after the May Blow from the northeast. These shallower nets caught small fish like chubs which were excellent for smoking and herring which if they were plentiful sold for as little as pennies per pound. Nets set as deep as seventy feet began to catch the lake's larger fish like trout and whitefish.

The fishermen usually left at dawn and got back to shore from a lift within a couple of hours. Their wives had breakfast waiting for them by the time they finished cleaning and packing the fish. Occasionally the man who stayed behind to chip ice and handle a few other chores might suggest a fish boil outside with bread and butter and maybe a few potatoes thrown into the pot, much like the fish boils that are so popular in Door County today.

By the time the nets were lifted and the fish were brought ashore area residents started arriving to buy some of the wonderful fresh fish. My father, "Duffy" (his nickname because he was one of several Adolph Stokdyks), would buy fish for a route he established out in the countryside. Area farmers, who tired of eating



Duffy Stokdyk  
(Photo Courtesy Cliff and Shirley Sager)

meat every day, were often eager to buy the fresh fish. In those days my father often sold herring or chubs at a price of three pounds for a dollar. During the Great Depression, when money was scarce, he would take eggs, ham, or anything the farmer had in exchange for fish.

During the Depression my father also worked nights at the Schwab Furnace Co. in Cedar Grove, thus allowing him only three or four hours of sleep per day. In the summertime he would take either myself or my brother Glenn along on his fish route to help keep him awake especially during the difficult hours of 11:00 A.M. to mid-afternoon. Each day he would sell anywhere from forty to fifty pounds of fish, and if there were any left in the chopped ice when we arrived home, guess who had fish for supper!

In spite of the fact that I ate a lot of fish as a child, I never tired of it, and to this day I frequently get a craving for fresh fish. My mother would also occasionally buy a coffee can full of trout livers which she would then fry lightly in butter. They were delicious but were very rich so we ate them sparingly. A one-pound coffee can of the delicacy cost only ten to twenty-five cents in those days, a real bargain and a real treat.

During some years local fishermen made a very good living. During others, however, when frequent storms tore the nets or when the fish were less plentiful, the fishermen depended on farming, or later on mink ranching, to supplement their incomes. The local fishermen survived even through the lean years since most Dutch families were used to being frugal, wasting nothing, having a wonderful ability to make do and help each other. Local fishermen never raised their nets on Sunday. That day was special for going to church and spending time with family and friends.

The winter season was used for many extra duties. One of the most important of these duties was the cutting of ice, usually from a nearby creek, pond or river. Area men sawed large chunks of ice weighing fifty to one hundred pounds each. The large blocks were then brought back to an ice house by horse and sled. After pulling the ice up the river into the the special shed, sawdust was layered over it to help preserve the ice until it was needed. Local butchers, grocers, and many individual families also used ice throughout the year, so a wide variety of local people helped cut and haul ice during the winter. Those of us who had



ice boxes in our homes could put a card in the window indicating our needs from twenty-five to one-hundred pounds. On hot summer days, children lined up next to the ice delivery wagon to catch a few delicious slivers of ice. The making of ice cream was, of course, one of our favorite uses of available ice in the summer, and since thick, heavy cream was plentiful, our homemade batches were so delicious. We hardly knew what a calorie was in those days.

Fishing along the shores of Lake Michigan has undoubtedly been going on for hundreds of years. The earliest fishermen were probably native Americans who traveled from other areas to the shores of Lake Michigan. In those days the fish were so plentiful that they were dried right on the shores and packed in birch bark and other baskets that were made by the Indians. For many years children who lived and played along the shores of Lake Michigan found colored beads, pottery shards, and arrowheads left behind by the native Americans.

As recently as the early 1900s, a huge fish called the sturgeon was plentiful in Lake Michigan. Records of the Gilbert Smith family, who started a fishery along Lake Michigan and went on to found the Village of Amsterdam, state that many sturgeon weighed over one-hundred pounds with some approaching 200 pounds. The sturgeon is a rather ugly, prehistoric-looking fish that was fairly easy to catch, especially in the spawning period when they were sluggish. The sturgeon would sometimes swim upstream into shallow creeks that fed Lake Michigan and get stranded there as the waters receded. My grandfather Peter Theune often told me how he and some of his friends would go down to the creek, lasso the big sturgeons, and then climb aboard their backs. I loved picturing the fun they had, but part of me always questioned whether this was just a big fish story. In later years I had a chance to visit with Oliver Smith, one of Gilbert Smith's descendents, at the Smith Brothers Restaurant in Port Washington. Oliver agreed that the story was true and claimed to have done the same thing on several Sunday afternoons when he and his cousins were looking for a bit of excitement.

Local residents who were at one time or another involved in commercial fishing include names that many will recognize. The Smies family established their fish shanty and homes just a couple miles north of Amsterdam. Dan Smies, Sr. had many sons



who eventually joined him in the fishing business. Some of those involved were Peter, Abram, Andrew, Edgar, Jannes, Lester, Louis, Don, and Dan, Jr. who later fished at Amsterdam with Jim Wieskamp.

Just north of the Smies establishment was that of the DeWitt brothers, Ike, Dick, and Peter. My father grew up on a farm at East Oostburg and for many years took me along to visit Ike and Sarah DeWitt. They never had any children, but Sarah made the best cookies and hot chocolate around, and Ike told the best stories, usually about cutting wood in the winter or about weathering some unusual storms while fishing. Sarah told me a story about the time that “it was so foggy you couldn’t see the person next to you.” The men were out lifting nets and the fog rolled in very suddenly. The wives were so worried about their mates that they got their old metal wash tubs and copper boilers and rushed down to the water’s edge. Sound carries very well over water, especially on a foggy day, so the women started beating on their metal tubs. Ike said if their wives hadn’t done that he hated to think where they might have gone, for it is the easiest thing in the world to become completely disoriented when out on the water. Perhaps the men were not carrying compasses with them at the time. I never thought to ask Ike, but as far as I know there were no fishermen lost in all those years.

Just north of the DeWitt establishment was that of Stokdyk and Ingelse. Harvey Stokdyk and Adrian Ingelse fished there for many years until Harvey’s sons Kenneth and Leland took over the business. There is still a small building at the end of Stokdyk Ingelse Road that was at one time used by these fishermen.

Other names that might be remembered with regard to commercial fishing in this area are Elmer and Harvey VanderJagt, Peter Westerbeke, Harry and “Shorty” Roerdink, Joe and Tim DeZoute, and Henry Kobes. Other local fishermen included John Jr., Winfred and Harry Wieskamp, Peter Zurmond, Billy and George VanDriest, Bart Grotenhuis and, of course, Eli Kolste who so often dropped by to refresh my memory. He also helped me realize how fortunate we were to have lived through those memorable times.

As the years rolled by, the amount of fish caught locally began to decrease dramatically. In 1916 D. Smies and Sons reportedly had catches of 5,500 pounds in a single day and 18,000 pounds

in one week in September. Daily catches declined somewhat over the next several decades and then declined very dramatically when the lamprey, an eel-like fish that attached itself to the belly of larger lake fish, invaded the waters of Lake Michigan. By the mid-1950s it hardly paid for local fishermen to lift their nets, and within a few years all of the local fishing establishments had closed.

While many local beaches were at one time used for commercial fishing, others, like the TeRonde Beach, were popular spots for vacations and church picnics. Children often played games on the “singing sands,” so called because the sand’s high silica content caused squeaking sounds to occur as bare-footed children ran across it. After high waves had washed the lower beach, a good game of baseball could be played, and on most summer days you could count on being cooled by an east breeze.

My brother Glenn has often remarked that when one is raised near water, there always is a need to either live near it or visit it often. Our Great Lakes should always be treasured, for they give us opportunity for recreation and provide ever changing scenes to help nourish the mind and body.



Snowbound at the Corner of Main Street and Union Avenue During the Early 1900s  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)



Christmas Season on South Main Street Near Wisconsin Avenue During the 1970s  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

## - Chapter Nine - Retail Businesses

### Introduction

**D**id you know that Cedar Grove once had a broom handle factory? Are you aware that Cedar Grove had several saloons and dance halls in its early years? Did you know that ladies could once purchase a made-to-order hat from a local milliner's shop? Does it surprise you that at one time the meat market would deliver your order to your door with an ox-drawn cart? These and other questions will be answered as we take a look at the stores and businesses of Cedar Grove.

Even before the first steam locomotive reached Cedar Grove, the village was an active trading center for early settlers in this region. Small stores were opened carrying a stock of provisions and were generally patronized by the resident farmers. While some insist that H.J. Traas operated the first store in Cedar Grove, others proclaim that it was J. Caljouw, Cornelius Cook, or C. Prinsen. The confusion hinges upon dates of not more than two years.

William DeSmidt built and operated the first blacksmith shop within the village although prior to that Mr. VanKeuben, who also served as one of the area's first school masters, reportedly had a similar shop between Amsterdam and Cedar Grove.

John Van Altena operated the first hotel. The first tin smith was C.W. Holle, and it is thought that D. Meengs was the first shoemaker. Other early businesses include W.M. Stronks and Company who operated a steam grist mill that ground an average of fifty bushels per day. In 1875 Garret Lammers built the Phoenix Elevator on the site of what later became Pantzer Lumber Company, and William Sweemer built a warehouse in 1878. Frank Mather is said to have operated the first cheese factory in

the village sometime during the 1870s. George Knowles built a mill on the Green Bay Road directly south of what later became the interurban or streetcar station. It was carried on by George Tyler as a flouring-mill and later by a firm manufacturing broom handles.

An article by Gus Schiereck in the February 10, 1900 *Sheboygan Herald* discussed many local businesses in detail and included the following business summary:

*Briefly told the business of Cedar Grove is embraced in these interests: four general stores, four saloons, two meat markets, two hotels, two blacksmith shops, two wagon repair shops, flour and feed store, tailoring store, hardware store, one lumber dealer, two grain elevators, one harness-making establishment, shoe repair shop, millinery store, two dressmakers, etc.*

The above quotation gives some indication as to the types of local business establishments that flourished in 1900. In 1947 Cedar Grove's official centennial booklet provided another point on the village's business time line. While little detail was provided about each local establishment at that time, most businesses advertised in the booklet. As a result one can get a pretty good picture of the types of businesses that were most common at that time. Copies of the 1900 Cedar Grove Business Directory and the 1947 centennial booklet are available for review at the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin, and at the Cedar Grove Public Library.

With the previous two points on Cedar Grove's time line established, it seems appropriate to provide some information about the village's present business and industry for comparison to the past. This chapter will deal primarily with retail establishments, while the following chapter will deal primarily with non-retail business and industry. Because some businesses are difficult to define, there may be some overlap between categories.

Please understand that it is impossible to discuss every business venture that existed within the Village of Cedar Grove over the past 150 years. While many past businesses having unique historical significance are included in this chapter and the next, it is not the intention of this book to cover every business that ever operated within the village. Most discussions relating to past

businesses are included to help readers understand how Cedar Grove's business and industry have changed over the years. Please also note that discussions relating to present-day businesses will be limited primarily to full-time businesses that advertise.

For the purposes of this book, the businesses discussed will be those located within the Village of Cedar Grove and those within one-half mile, by car, of the nearest village limit.

### Grocery Stores

A few words must be said about the differences in services and perks from our grocers over the years. In the early 1900s a mother could send a ten-year-old girl to the store to buy twenty-five cents worth of pork steak, five pounds of sugar and a loaf of bread, and the child would say to the grocer, "charge it, please." Most stores went along with charge customers. However, in an ad in an old *Cedar Grove Messenger*, the Eagle Grocery was listed as a "CASH STORE." The stores that did charge expected that the bill would be paid monthly, but during the depression that didn't always happen. When you paid your bill, a bag of candy was often the reward. At least twice-weekly delivery was a real convenience. If your order was placed by 9:00 a.m., the groceries would be on the table in your kitchen by noon. Now that was a real service, one that senior citizens would love to have today. Christmas gifts were often given to good and regular customers as many of you reading this text can attest to. Many older readers might have an antique bowl with the words Bloemers and Walfoort printed on the bowl or a calendar or some kitchen utensil.

While most groceries come from a central warehouse today, in the early 1900s much of the summer produce came from small garden plots. Carrots (washed and bunched with greens), radishes, onions, potatoes, tomatoes, beans, cabbage, and many other produce items were grown right in the area and brought to the stores. This gave the growers a few extra dollars to get them through the lean years. Eggs were also brought in and candled right in the store, and the farmer got a credit slip to buy groceries. These eggs, when sold, were put into brown PAPER bags for the customers. The customers carried them home very carefully! Cheese came in longhorns, and very, very long ago butter could

be bought in bulk. An ad in the *Cedar Grove Messenger* of November, 1930 listed bulk peanut butter for fifteen cents a pound. Today's customers demand much more variety, and in the present Piggly Wiggly store as many as two-hundred different kinds and sizes of cereal are offered.

The first Eagle Grocery and Shoe Company in Cedar Grove was located on the west side of Main Street near the railroad tracks. Part of the history of that store was covered in the *Sheboygan Press*, in the February 2, 1929, issue where it said:

*The Eagle Grocery and Shoe Company of Cedar Grove was started in 1921 by John Smies and Anthony Huibregtse of Cedar Grove and H.A. Verhulst of Sheboygan. The company commenced business in an old frame building which was erected about 50 years ago located on the west side of the main street...*

In November of 1928 the store was sold to G. William Soerens. On February 1, 1929, a fire destroyed most of the buildings on that side of the street including the Eagle Grocery. The fire was believed to have started in the basement of the Eagle Grocery store, but no cause could be found. In a most neighborly gesture, Oscar VandeWall, owner of a men's clothing store one block north, allowed the Eagle Grocery to occupy one-half of his clothing store until Soerens could rebuild.

Eventually a new Eagle Grocery store was built on the east side of Main Street across from the one that was destroyed by fire. This store later became affiliated with the I.G.A. chain. G. William Soerens was owner-operator of the store until his death on Labor Day in 1940. At that time, Soerens' son Norbert took over the store and for a short time George Dickens managed the new meat counter when the store was remodeled. After Norbert passed away, his widow Josephine and his younger brother William operated the store until the early 1970s. Eventually the store was sold to Cliff and Shirley Sager who in 1975 started publishing a local weekly newspaper called the *Villager*. This entertaining little paper was published for approximately ten years. Today this same building, now with a lovely Dutch front, houses the workshop of TerMaat and TeBeest Carpenters.



Just north of the present Main Street bank building was VandeWall's Grocery. Oscar VandeWall bought a small frame building where John Potts once had a men's clothing and dry goods store. For a short while Oscar continued selling men's clothing in the store. Then he began to sell men's clothing in one-half of the store and groceries in the other half. Soon groceries took over the entire store. In 1947 Oscar's son Phillip bought the business and operated it in the same location until 1975. At that time Phil sold the business to the Ron Oras family who changed the name of the store to the Cedar Grove Market. The business was first operated as a grocery store and then as a mini-mart and meeting place for young people. The time for small neighborhood grocery stores was past, though, so the store was eventually closed and the building was sold. In the mid-1980s the building was razed along with several other old buildings to make room for the Cedar Grove Clinic.

Another grocery store, the Center Store, was once operated in the building that presently houses Dutch Crust Bakery. In the early 1900s, G. Grotenhuis purchased the store from Garret Stronks. The store was later operated by Grotenhuis' son Ulysses after he returned home from serving in World War I. Clerks who worked with him were Chester Walvoord, Lou Walvoord, and Miss Gertrude Graaskamp. In the mid-1930s the building was sold to Herman and Gus Grobowski (Gus later changed his last name to Garson) who moved their bakery business there from the Schipper building just to the north. The Schipper (pronounced "skipper") building was so named because a family by that name once lived there.

At some point after the Center Store closed, the building was divided into two separate store fronts. The south half of the building then housed the Cedar Grove Bakery. The north half of the building was eventually operated as another grocery store. That store was run by Cap and Mary Voskuil for about two years and by Curtis Kreunen for a few additional years.

Approximately one block north on the southeast corner of Main Street and Union Avenue stands a building with a rich history in retail business. The *Sheboygan Herald* of February 10, 1900, notes that in 1895 J.D. Vreman purchased a general store business from Henry Meengs. It appears that Vreman then



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operated the general store in the building on the corner, and operated a clothing and tailoring business in an adjacent building. The February 10, 1900 *Sheboygan Herald*, which included a Cedar Grove Business Directory, went on to say:

*The stock of groceries, dry goods, crockery, shoes and hardware is of the best, and the wants of the people are well-looked after by this concern.*

Sometime before 1923 two gentlemen with the last names of Lensink and DeMaster joined to operate the general store and grocery at the corner of Main and Union. Next, Matt DeMaster and Ben Huenink owned it for a few years until the business was sold to John Bloemers and his brother-in-law Bart Walfoort. Bart continued as a partner for approximately twelve years and then left to pursue other interests. John Bloemers was the sole owner until 1946 when Harry and Dorothea Harmelink became the next grocers. When Mr. Bloemers had the store it was indeed general merchandise and sold paint, shoes, boots, small tools, household



Matt DeMaster's General Store, Which Later Became the Corner Store  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

gadgets, and more. As soon as most of the general store merchandise was sold out, Harry Harmelink remodeled the store inside and out and concentrated on the grocery part of the business. In 1967 Herbert Dirkse, who had briefly operated a store in Gibbssville, purchased the Corner Store where he operated the grocery business until 1980.

By 1980 Herb wanted bigger and better things for his customers, so he joined the Piggly Wiggly chain and built a supermarket at 240 North Commerce Street. In 1991 the Piggly Wiggly store was enlarged to nearly twice its original size. Dirkse's Piggly Wiggly, which employs approximately forty full-time and part-time workers, has a large produce department, fresh meat, frozen foods of all kinds, and a delicatessen. One can now buy a complete meal at the delicatessen, add a bouquet of fresh flowers for a centerpiece, and have a special meal with very little work.

Since the early grocery stores were usually general merchandise stores, they didn't sell meat. If you didn't know someone who could sell you half a pig or a quarter of beef, you went to the meat market. The *Sheboygan Herald* of February 10, 1900 lists Neerhof and Meinen as early proprietors of the Cedar Grove Meat Market which was located south of the present co-op office. The article says that the proprietors were "Wholesale and Retail Dealers in Fresh Salt Meats and All Kinds of Sausages," and goes on to say:

*...the above named firm are the proprietors of the Cedar Grove Meat Market and ever since the season of 1893, they have been established on the south side where there the wants of the public in the meat and sausage line were promptly attended to. Besides the village trade they run a wagon and supply the country customers in season.*

Later, M. J. Jacoby and John Birenbaum were the owners and delivered orders to homes with an ox-drawn wagon. John Dees worked for Jacoby and Birenbaum for a time and then purchased the business from them. A Sheboygan County Village and Farmer Directory, which was published while John Dees ran the Cedar Grove Meat Market, shows a display advertisement for



The Cedar Grove Meat Market's Ox-Drawn Cart Used for Local Deliveries  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)  
John Dees in Doorway, Mike Jacoby in Wagon, John Birenbaum in Front

the business with the caption "Mail Orders Solicited."

Leland Meylink operated the Cedar Grove Meat Market for a short while during the mid-1950s before Paul Dolfen and Lloyd Janisse acquired the business. Eventually Lloyd Janisse pursued other employment, and Paul Dolfen ran the business alone. By then the business included small freezer compartment rentals that could be used by people who didn't have a freezer at home. At the time of its closing in about 1970, the business also included a mini-mart where customers could purchase bread, milk, and a limited assortment of canned goods.

In the 1920s John Dees established the John C. Dees Dairy, which was operated in connection with the Cedar Grove Meat Market. Initially milk was delivered by horse-drawn wagon. Eugene (Smitty) DeSmidt delivered milk for Dees when a horse-drawn wagon was used. In later years an engine-powered delivery van was used on the route. In either case housewives would indicate how much milk they needed by writing their order on a slip of paper and then placing it partway into an empty bottle.

The empty bottles were then set on the front step and the exchange was made for filled bottles. Daily delivery was important because many people did not have ice boxes and could only order as much as could be kept cool in the basement for a short while. In winter the milk had to be taken in immediately or it would freeze. Les Nyenhuis worked in the milk delivery part of the business at one time. Eventually he purchased that portion of the business and built a bottling and pasteurization plant across the street.

At least two other dairies are known to have been operated in the Cedar Grove area as well. The Shady Lane Dairy was begun in 1931 by Bill Schreurs, well before Les Nyenhuis operated his business. At that time horses were used exclusively to pull the delivery wagon that carried the milk. The horses were so well trained that they knew exactly which houses to stop at, giving the route man time to deliver the order and come back to find the horse-drawn wagon still in its place. Lloyd Baden also operated the Shady Lane Dairy at some point during the 1940s. At that time the business was located in what is now a garage at the Phil VanEss residence. Eventually Lloyd Baden went into other work, and his father Robert took over the dairy.

Bill TenPas operated the TenPas Dairy from approximately 1963 until its closing in 1974. Bill delivered Verifine products to area homes throughout that time. Initially he traveled to Sheboygan each day for the products he distributed, but later Verifine brought the orders directly to him.

### **Bakery**

In the mid-1930s Herman and Gus Grabowski, who were already operating a bakery in the village, moved the business to its present location from the Schipper building just to the north. Apparently they then divided the building into two separate store fronts and used the south half of the building's lower level to operate the bakery. The Grobowski's eventually sold the bakery business to Harold Schultz, who in May of 1950 began to feed the big Middlesy-Marshall oil-burning ovens with breads, rolls, coffee cakes, and other delicacies.

The Schultzes operated the Cedar Grove Bakery until 1963 when Carl and Ann Kettleson moved here from Watertown to run

the business. Carl soon converted the oven to gas for faster warm-up (forty-five minutes) and better control. An article in the *Plymouth Review* once stated “Its shelves revolve slowly like a huge ferris wheel and can bake 48 dozen Danish or 192 full-size loaves of bread at one time.”

The Kettlesons continued operating the bakery until 1972, when Peter Campione bought the business. At one point, while the Campiones owned the bakery, they ran a small pizza parlor in the north half of the same building. Unfortunately Mr. Campione was injured in an accident in 1978 and was unable to continue with the bakery, so the Kettlesons came back to run the business once again.

Carl and Ann Kettleson sold the bakery in 1985 to their daughter and son-in-law Marion and Harland Hopeman. The Hopemans eventually changed the business name to Dutch Crust Bakery and expanded the business to include a coffee shop in the north half of the building. The coffee shop is a popular meeting place, for who can resist the delicious smells coming from that store? Light noon lunches are presently available as well. Since the early 1980s the Dutch Crust Bakery has been providing a 108-foot-long Woorstebroedje for the Holland Festival on an annual basis.

An article in the August 20, 1991 *Plymouth Review* states:

*Today, Dutch Crust's wholesale and retail businesses are booming. Wholesale makes up about half of the business. The bakery delivers on a daily basis to accounts in Sheboygan and Port Washington, not to mention to the Sheboygan Falls Dutch Crust, where only the sandwiches are made on site. To keep things flowing smoothly, Dutch Crust Bakery operates two shifts: a day crew and evening crew. Low-fat products have “taken off” along with croissants and muffins.*

### **Restaurants**

Cedar Grove residents obviously had a few spare nickels and dimes for sweets and eats because at various times and places there were many sweet shops and burger shops within the village. Cedar Grove still has several of those places where friends meet and the news gets passed around as coffee cups are filled and refilled.



Sweet Shop on North End of Bakery Building During the Late 1940s  
(Photo Courtesy Leona Theune)

During the late 1930s Harold Stokdyk operated a sweet shop in the present Marquita Beauty Shop just north of Dutch Crust Bakery. Elmer Claerbout also ran a sweet shop for a time in the north half of the building that presently houses the bakery. Elmer continued in business there until the late 1940s or early 1950s. Eugene and Trudy Pax operated a sweet shop at the same location in 1955 but stayed for only a short time. Gerald Soerens was the next proprietor until November 1, 1958, when Ralph DeSmidt began his career as a restaurant owner in the short order restaurant and sweet shop.

In about 1970 Ralph DeSmidt closed the sweet shop and moved one block north to begin DeSmidt's [DeZwaan] Restaurant and Good 'N Plenty Coffee Shop. The building that housed the new restaurant had once been an auto dealership and service station, so a complete remodeling was necessary. When finished, the new restaurant's dining room was circled with Dutch tiles, and large pictures of former Holland Festival queens were displayed along with many other Dutch pictures. The decor was Dutch and items on the menu were American and Dutch. The



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DeSmidts sold Dutch lace, Delft pottery and other Dutch imports in the coffee shop, and the clientele came from a large surrounding area. Ralph and Shirley, with the help of their children Peter and Gretchen, continued in business until DeZwaan (the building as named by the DeSmidts) was purchased by Larry and Debbie Lenz and Mike and Wendy Heinen in 1987. Since then, the Dutch decor and good menu have helped keep DeZwaan a popular place to dine.

Other village restaurants which preceded DeZwaan by many years were located in what is now Claerbout Interiors. This building was a bank before it was a restaurant, and John Lammers likely operated the first restaurant there. Fritz and Hibby Mueller continued with a restaurant in that building and they were followed by John Mossholder, Lloyd Baden, and Elmer Claerbout. All had eating establishments there until Elmer Claerbout went into the furniture business.

Lloyd's Drive-In, built by Lloyd Tenpas in the mid-1950s, was one of the early true drive-ins where car hops came to take your order and then brought the order out to you. One new menu item



Elmer Claerbout's Restaurant in the Present Claerbout Furniture Store  
(Photo Courtesy Leona Theune)



Lloyd's Drive-In During the Mid-1950s  
(Photo Courtesy Howard and Nancy Rushton)

introduced to area residents was the frozen custard made right at the drive-in. As built, the drive-in only had ten stools for eating indoors. Later, however, Lloyd enlarged the building to meet the increased need for full menus and to improve business throughout the winter months. The restaurant's car hop service was discontinued at about that time. Located on the former U.S. Highway 141, the restaurant was often a stop for truckers.

In 1980 the restaurant was purchased by Gerald and Edie DeRuyter and was known as Jer and Edie's. Later it became known as Edie's, and in 1991 the business name was changed to Country Grove Restaurant when Ann Scott started her four years in the restaurant. In 1995 Bruce and Barb Lukens began operating the business and redecorated the building to its present decor. Morning coffee time finds many people congregating there, and the restaurant is a pleasant place for dining while others purchase carry-out meals to eat at home.

### **Hotels and Taverns**

In the horse and buggy days hotels and saloons were of great





Cedar Grove's Main Street, South of the Railroad Crossing in Approximately 1904  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

importance even in small villages. Long trips were interspersed with rest stops for people as well as for horses. By the late 1870s John VanAltena was operating a hotel on the west side of Main Street, just south of the railroad crossing.

Another saloon and hotel called the American House was in business for many years. H.J. Brecht was the proprietor at one time and his credentials of cordiality and “having a well-conducted house and good accommodations” probably accounted for the good name he had. The American House, which was located south of the present Co-op Exchange, was sold at auction on February 2, 1897, because of illness in the family. Peter Huisheere was the auctioneer (*Sheboygan Herald*, February 10, 1900).

In 1899 George J. Braun became the proprietor of a saloon and meat market in a large two-story building at the southwest corner of Main Street and Union Avenue. Mr. Braun was a musician, playing both violin and piano. The upper floor of the building was a large dance hall, but whether Mr. Braun conducted that part of the business is uncertain. At some point Gus Schiereck



The Cedar Grove Hotel, Which is Presently Sportsman's Bar, During the Early 1900s  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

apparently owned that property. It is not presently known whether Mr. Schiereck owned the building when Mr. Braun was running the business. In 1914 this building became a print shop, which was the start of Standard Printing.

John Jungers, who was another multi-faceted businessman, at one time operated a saloon as one of his business interests. The February 10, 1900 *Sheboygan Herald* said about this business:

*His saloon is conveniently located and is neat and finely decorated. Mr. Jungers has a phonograph which affords pleasant entertainment for his customers.*

Of all of the hotels and taverns that have operated in the Village of Cedar Grove, the present Sportsman's Bar appears to have the best documented history. While Wisconsin was still a territory and Indians were coming to the shores of Lake Michigan for their annual fishing run, a parcel of land was sold by the United States Government at their Green Bay land office to Horatio N. Miner. The transaction was dated February 14, 1837. From the abstract it must be noted that each time a change of ownership took place it was stated that a strip of land one rod wide be provided to Garrett Stronks for a road. This would be the street directly south of the present Sportsman's Bar and Grill or

as we know it, Cedar Avenue.

In 1837 a part of the entire parcel was sold to David Giddings. Others who owned parcels of that land over the years include Samuel I. McComus, John Alden and his wife Jane, Hendrik Walvoord, Anna Marie Walvoord, Mary and Henry Sweemer, Johannes Sweemer, John Sweemer Jr., Frank and Maggie Hirn, and John A. Ramaker who made his purchase in 1890. The property was transferred from John A. Ramaker to John Henry Ramaker in 1891. John Henry Ramaker is the first one listed as using the premises for a hotel and saloon.

By 1900, the subject building was being operated as the Cedar Grove Hotel. The Cedar Grove Hotel, which had its own livery stable, was an active stop-over for weary travelers. The February 10, 1900, edition of the *Sheboygan Herald* said about Peter Stokdyk the hotel proprietor: "He is a thorough gentleman and all who stop with him are assured of good treatment." The article went on to say:

*His stock of liquors, wines and cigars are of the best and he thoroughly understands the art of fancy drinks. Dances are held and our younger people find amusement in tripping the fantastic.*

When John Henry Ramaker passed away, the land that he had purchased went to his widow Hannah and to his children Mabel Ramaker, Clara Ramaker, Harvey Ramaker, and Winfred Ramaker who was just fifteen years old at that time.

Winfred (Winnie) Ramaker began his business career not in the saloon owned by his father but in a sweet shop on the west side of Main Street across from the saloon. After the fire of 1929, Winnie apparently went into the saloon business and continued there until he sold the business to Leo and Selma Preisler in 1945. The Preislers had previously operated a tavern in a building that was located where Bruce Foundry now has a parking lot and storage building.

In 1948 the tavern was sold to Sylvester and Evelyn Lanser. The Lansers owned the building until 1971 but leased the business to their daughter Mary Jane and her husband Lamont Lukens from 1966 to 1968. In 1971 Evelyn, now widowed, sold the business to Richard and Michelle Uselding who operated the



The Former Preisler Tavern Building on the West Side of South Main Street  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

tavern until Larry and Sharon Anderson bought it in 1973. The Andersons continued in the business until 1976.

John and Regina Steffen took over the business in 1976 and with their five sons, Jeff, John, Joel, Jim, and Jay, operated the only tavern in Cedar Grove. They sold the business in 1983 to Phillip and Lori Verville. The Vervilles, then Bruce and Barb Lukens, Rod and Shelley Kirsh and present owner Steve Stockero bring the cycle of ownership up-to-date.

From 1837 to 1997 this plot of land had many owners. From what can be determined, it was only the Ramaker family that used the building as a hotel, saloon, and dance hall.

### **Funeral Parlor/Furniture Store**

A building that is now gone but which was on the scene for many years began as the First Reformed Church. When a new and larger edifice was planned, the old building was moved about one block north to a site between the present DeZwaan Restaurant and Union Station. There the building became a furniture store and funeral parlor. The building, with hand-hewn beams and wooden pegs, was solid. When it was torn down in

the mid-1970s, some of the rafters were found to still be covered with bark.

The first funeral directors in the village were Ed Sonke and Henry Harmelink who were also in the painting and wallpapering business. Apparently neither was a fully-licensed undertaker but carried on nevertheless. In the early 1900s, Edward TeRonde bought the funeral parlor building and moved in with his family. The family lived in the rear of the building while TeRonde carried on the undertaking business, provided painting and wallpapering services, and sold furniture. Besides all that, Ed framed pictures and sold go-carts (devices used to help carry luggage during travel), and baby carriages. Combined business was the practice in many cases. It might be noted that behind the building horses could be kept in the horse barns. At one time the hearse was drawn by horses. Austin Voskuil remembers that his mother's casket was taken to the cemetery in 1916 by a horse-drawn hearse.

Ed TeRonde's sons, both Irwin and Ellsworth, took training to become funeral directors and were so licensed. Irwin eventually bought the business and continued to sell furniture as well as becoming the sole funeral director. In 1964 Mr. Robert Hartley moved here from Michigan to become the next funeral director. Unfortunately, failing health caused him to discontinue the business by the early 1970s. Shortly thereafter the funeral parlor was razed and the land that it stood on was parceled between the two adjacent landowners.

### **Hardware Stores, Implement Dealers, Etc.**

Hardware stores were to the farmers what the variety stores were to housewives. A wide variety of items from nails to window panes were available. In the present store you can find everything from birdseed to riding lawn mowers.

Throughout much of its history, Cedar Grove had two hardware stores. The first store was originally located on the west side of South Main Street and was operated by Andrew VanderLaan. This store was a victim of a disastrous fire in 1929. Rebuilding went on, this time across the street in the hardware store's present location just south of Cedar Avenue. Henry Obbink and John Ruesink eventually joined to take over the business. They did tin work, plumbing and managed the store.

In 1939, the store was purchased by the Ebberts family, headed by Garret Ebberts. The Ebberts family owned hardware stores in Sheboygan, Gibbsville, Oostburg, and now Cedar Grove. George Ebberts and his wife Alyce moved to Cedar Grove to operate the Cedar Grove store. This could be considered an early example of a chain store. The upper floor was made into a residence at that time. George Ebberts purchased the business from G.H. Ebberts & Sons in 1950 and continued in the store until 1968. Since that time three other owners have supplied the village with hardware goods. Virgil Nonhof and his wife, Delores, owned the store from 1968 until 1978 when Thomas Zachman bought the business. The Zachman family sold the store to the present owners, Glen TenDolle and Paul Huenink, in 1983. The present owners sell and install carpeting and other floor coverings in addition to selling the usual hardware store goods.

The site of another hardware store, whose building was a landmark in Cedar Grove for many years, can be traced back to the time the Village of Cedar Grove began. A chronological listing of landowners begins with the United States Government selling the land in parcels to Martin Owen in 1846, 1848, and 1849. Martin Owen and Thankful, his wife, sold to Gerrit H. Kolste and his wife Jocomina in 1851 at a price of \$400 for the approximately eighty acres. Others who have been listed as owners of the subject property over the years include Peter and Maria Liefbroer, Henry Liefbroer, Jenny Liefbroer, and Adrian Theune, who purchased the property in 1909. Adrian Theune and his wife Josephine sold the property to Elmer J. TeRonde and his wife Pearl in 1932.

The TeRondes sold the property to Ben Huenink, Sr. in 1940, and he sold it to the Cedar Grove Hardware Company in 1946. Ray Hilbelink, who had worked for Ben Huenink in the store at one time, became owner of the combination plumbing business and hardware store when he and his wife Lona purchased the building in 1959. For a time Erwin Claerbaut managed the hardware store while Ernie Wieberdink joined Ray in the plumbing part of the business. The plumbing business, which became E&R Plumbing, operated from the basement of the store for many years.

Erwin Claerbaut eventually left the hardware store to pursue



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other work. The first floor of the building was later used by Harry Neustal for an appliance store, and for a short time during the mid-1960s George VanSluys sold radios and televisions there. E&R Plumbing bought the building from Ray and Lona Hilbelink in 1971 and sold it to Robert and Maxine Witt in 1977. The Witts sold appliances there for a time. The building that had started as a hardware store and had served so many different people was razed in 1985 along with several other stores to make room for the present Cedar Grove Clinic.

After selling the old hardware store building, E&R Plumbing moved to a concrete block building on Commerce Street where Jim Waech had previously manufactured concrete tile. Roger Jentink, who had worked for E&R Plumbing for many years, now owns and operates the business at that Commerce Street location.

Many years ago Peter DeMaster had the agency to sell International Harvester machines in and around the Village of Cedar Grove. An early newspaper advertisement proclaimed “If



Peter DeMaster with Daughter Augusta at His Implement Dealership Along South Main Street  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

I can't satisfy you on a plow in style and price, nobody can. I grind plowshares and do it right." Peter had farm machinery for sale, sharpened scissors, did tin work, and a little of everything else.

At one time DeMaster sold corn drills for thirty-two dollars and cultivators for twenty-eight dollars. This jack-of-all-trades business, which was of great importance to area farmers, was located just north of the old village hall about where the fire station now stands. According to Augusta Risseeuw, who is Peter's daughter, her grandfather told Peter that he could help in the business if he could put together a reaper and have it work. At that time machinery parts came by rail in gunny sacks and a local delivery man hauled them to the proper location on a dray wagon. Well, Peter put the parts together, hitched the horses to the reaper, and went to a nearby field. The reaper worked and at the tender age of fourteen Peter DeMaster went into business with his father John. Peter then worked at that same job until his retirement. Peter later sold his property to Dr. James Jensen who removed the old building from the lot and built his first medical office there.

Besides being the rural carrier for the postal system, Henry (Hank) Huibregtse had an electric shop that included electrical service and the selling of electrical appliances. Hank helped bring the convenience of electricity to many area farms. By about 1942 Hank and his son Robert (Rob) were in business together. Rob later ran the business alone for many years until 1978 when his son-in-law Larry Wieberdink started working with him. After Rob's untimely passing, Larry ran the electrical business alone for several years.

Today Het Museum, which is located directly across from DeZwaan Restaurant, displays artifacts that were used by Dutch immigrants during Cedar Grove's early history. Before becoming a museum, however, that building housed a variety of businesses. It was built as a cheese factory in the 1870s and was first used by the Mather brothers for that purpose. William Stronks began making and shipping cheese in 1879. By 1882 Stronks and John Vande Wall were in partnership and Vande Wall added a 16 x 26 foot curing room. The back room of the museum exactly matches those dimensions.

Another change of ownership brought John Huenink and



Anthony VandeWall to the business in 1886. In 1889 the building was sold again, this time to John Huenink and John VandeWall. VandeWall next sold his one-half share in 1895 to Henry Huenink, and for the next fifteen years it was known as Huenink Brothers Cheese Company.

G.W. Soerens, a blacksmith, bought the building in 1911 and John Ruesink joined him in 1917. These men continued in the smithy business until John Roelse and Albert Rusch became the next owners and carried on with the blacksmithing until World War II started. From then on we no longer had a blacksmith in Cedar Grove. After the war the building was used by Ruesinks for their plumbing and heating business until the building was converted into Het Museum in 1976, the year of our nation's bicentennial.

### **Standard Printing**

In 1914 a printing shop was opened by Louis Posekany and Charles Holesovsky in a large gray building with Victorian trim at the southwest corner of Main Street and Union Avenue. The printers, who also published the eight-page weekly *Cedar Grove Tribune* for a time, immediately called the business The Standard Printing Company.

Henry Grotenhuis purchased the printing business in 1922 and operated it until 1948 when he sold it to Marvin Duenk. Marvin continued to operate the business in the same location until 1954 when he moved to a new building on North Main Street.

Standard Printing Company continues to operate at the North Main Street address to this day. During the time Marv Duenk owned the business, he added new offset presses to use along with continued letterpress printing. In 1975 the business was expanded to include a Christian bookstore called The Upper Room. The bookstore was ably managed by Marv's wife Rose. This combination print shop and bookstore was sold in 1985 to Jim and Laura Brazel. The Brazels lived there and operated the business until 1992 when Mr. Brazel became a sales representative for Christian bookstores.

Standard Printing, the company that published this book, was next purchased by Mr. and Mrs. Greg Narus. Both Greg and Chris are experienced printers, and they continue to operate the



Standard Printing in 1954  
(Photo Courtesy Marv and Rose Duenk)

printing plant, adding and updating equipment as needed to stay competitive.

### **General Merchandise, Specialty Stores, Etc.**

John Potts' Dry Goods Store and Variety Store both deserve attention. Even though cars became the mode of travel rather than horses in the early 1900s, no one traveled all the way to Sheboygan for household goods and small articles. In fact, in many cases a trip to Sheboygan was a well-planned trip. Because of this fact, a general merchandise store was a necessity in most small villages. The first frame building used for John Potts' dry goods store was on the west side of South Main Street, across from the railroad depot. By the mid-1920s this building was too small for all of the merchandise he sold, so in 1927 he started what became a new and larger store, almost a mini department store, at the site of the present Cedar Grove Variety. There he sold men's suits, shoes, boots, pottery, and a large selection of yard goods and notions to accompany them. Mothers made most of the clothing for their children in the early 1900s, and they found the materials for those projects at Potts' store. In addition to the variety of merchandise on the first level, the second floor was

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filled with pottery of all kinds as well as fine china.

A little-remembered item of interest is that John Potts once bought a number of books which he loaned or rented out, thus providing an early library of sorts for Cedar Grove. And all this time we thought the Cedar Grove Book Club was the precursor of our modern public library. Diana Nett, our present public librarian, has a well-worn book with an insert stating that the book belongs to the John Potts Lending Library. The fee for use of the book was shown as five cents per week.

After John Potts died, his wife Matilda kept the store going for a short while and then began renting the business to Chris Evanoff in 1941. Chris operated the local store for a few years and then started working with other Evanoff family members in their Sheboygan Falls business. At that point Carl Jetzer took over the Cedar Grove Variety Store. By the late 1940s Chris returned to Cedar Grove and purchased the Variety Store which he then managed until 1976.

Although Chris Evanoff was not a Dutchman by name, there was no one who worked harder to promote Cedar Grove, especially during the later years when our Holland Festival became an



Interior of Cedar Grove Variety Store During the Mid-1940s  
(Photo Courtesy Carl & Gloria Jetzer)  
L-R: Laverne Rawerdink Schreurs, Carl Jetzer

annual affair. In fact, in an ethnic slide presentation in the lower level of the Statue of Liberty, the Dutch Village of Cedar Grove is (or at least once was) represented by a close-up of Chris in full Dutch costume. Chris left the business in 1976, and Russell Roethel owned the Variety Store, as it was known by that time, until he sold it to Terry and Jennifer DeHaai in 1993. The DeHaais also began a photography studio in the former public library building southeast of the railroad crossing.

The building that presently houses Claerbout Interiors served both as a bank and restaurant before it became a furniture store. Elmer Claerbout started the furniture business after previously operating both a restaurant and sweet shop. After adding to the original building twice, Claerbout Furniture carried a large inventory of all kinds of furniture and floor coverings and later added wallpaper as well. This store also brought many people into the village from out of town. When Elmer's son Warren and his wife Judy took over the business it was flourishing. In 1993 Warren and Judy retired, and Dennis and Sheila Kappers presently operate the business. From bank to restaurant to furniture store, this building has served the community well for many years.

Like most small communities the Village of Cedar Grove had numerous specialty stores in its early days. Many of these specialty stores were started by women entrepreneurs who, as widows, had to make a living to support themselves and perhaps several children. One such shop was operated by Ruth Grotenhuis from her home located where the Chiropractic Clinic now stands. Ruth, who was widowed, supported herself and her family by selling women's garments, especially lingerie.

At one time Leona Lemke operated a women's apparel shop on the north end of the former Academy building at the corner of Main Street and VanAltena Avenue. A 1930 advertisement listed silk and wool hose! On the south end of the lower flat she also operated a restaurant. Though often called a tea shop, she did make full meals there. According to Dorothy Theune, who worked there, one of the village bakers (Herman) often came in for his meals and many times ordered sliced onions and sliced oranges! How's that for a gourmet side dish?

Another lady entrepreneur was Hannah Walvoord who had a milliner's shop. It was located in the building just south of the

present State Farm Insurance office. In an ad dated November 5, 1907, she advertised her fall millinery opening. She advertised “the most complete line of fashionable millinery in all the latest shapes and trimmings.” Sometimes little girls would stop by on the way home from school and watch as Hannah would take a pre-made form and decorate it with feathers, bows, lace, and whatever the customer would fancy. The business was still open in the early 1920s, and there are women today who remember when their mother took in an old hat to have it altered with new ribbons and bows.

At two different times jewelry stores were operated in the Village of Cedar Grove. The name and date of operation for the first store could not be verified. The second jewelry store was affiliated with Wilbert’s Jewelry Store in Sheboygan. The store was located in the former Leo Preisler tavern building on the west side of South Main Street. Delores Meinen confirms that this store existed because she worked there for a time. The jewelry store was not operated in Cedar Grove for very long, though, and while here it was only open a few days a week.

After being vacant for some time, the old Corner Store at Main Street and Union Avenue was revived during the mid-1980s. Mrs. Mitzie Janey was one person who wanted to try her hand at running a business, so she leased the front of the former Corner Store and for five years ran Windmill Hobbies which featured a wide variety of hand-crafted items.

The building was sold in 1988 to Ralph Allen and Jack Bartzen who purchased it for use as a wholesale shoe business. It was called the Kettle Moraine Shoe Company. Since they worked in the back part of the building not many people knew the business existed.

In 1991 the former Corner Store took on an entirely new look when a Dutch store called Winkel van de Achterhoek, whose translation appropriately means “first store on the corner,” was opened by Ralph and Shirley DeSmidt. The DeSmidts stocked this unique specialty store with really special merchandise including imported Dutch lace, Delft pottery, Dutch foods, greeting cards, books, antiques, crafts and many more items. Being in an advantageous location, people coming into the village often stopped to browse and shop. The little Dutch boy in front of the store served as an invitation to stop in and enjoy shopping for a

little bit of Holland. The DeSmidts operated Winkel van de Achterhoek at its Main Street location until March of 1997.

One little-known fact about the Village of Cedar Grove is that it was the site of one of the first coin-operated laundromats in the area. When Les Nyenhuis discontinued the milk route that he had run for many years, he converted his building into a laundromat. In 1978 he also began the first self-service dry-cleaning business in the area.

A second laundromat was started in Cedar Grove by Jim and Connie Grotenhuis in 1974. Jim served as the general contractor for the combination laundromat and residence on East Union Avenue. After twenty years the business and property were sold to Bruce and Barb Lukens who presently operate the laundromat.

The Dutch Cleaners dry-cleaning business was started by Ed and Betty Harmeling in 1949. In 1953 Owen Meinen and Carl Voskuil formed a partnership and began to operate the business. Fire damaged the interior of the building in 1962, but thanks to the assistance of family and friends, the business was up and running again in less than two weeks. In 1964 a large addition was constructed to the west of the original building and the business' entrance was moved from the northeast corner of the building (very near the railroad tracks) to the north side. In 1976 Owen Meinen purchased Carl Voskuil's share of the original partnership, and in 1988 present owner Jere Ebberts purchased the business from Owen Meinen.

One of Cedar Grove's newest businesses is Windmill Gardens and Floral Shop which officially opened during Memorial Day weekend in 1992. Owned and operated by Gary Winkelhorst, it is a complete garden center selling not only flowers and vegetable seedlings but trees and shrubs as well. The business is located on North Commerce Street.

### **Insurance Agencies**

Holland Mutual is the second oldest insurance company in the State of Wisconsin. It was chartered in June of 1870 by a group of farmers who initially only sold fire insurance. During the company's early years the premium for insurance on a house was determined primarily by how many chimneys the house had (Remember, this was fire insurance, and most people used wood



burning stoves or furnaces). In time available coverage was expanded to include many other types of insurance as well. At that time a most unusual practice was for a customer to buy term insurance, pay the fee for five years, and have a paid-up policy. All a customer had to do to keep the policy in force was to pay an annual fee of two dollars.

Ernest Onnink and Harry TerMaat were early officer/agents for the firm. Les Draayers joined the business in about 1964 and soon wind-storm, liability, inland marine, theft, and home and farm owners insurance were added. Jerry Grotenhuis became secretary of Holland Mutual in 1984, and the firm's offices were moved to the former Dr. James Jensen medical building on South Main Street.

“Like a Good Neighbor,” the State Farm Insurance agency is located just two doors north of Holland Mutual. Brian Gesch is the agent and is a Chartered Life Underwriter and also a Chartered Financial Counselor. State Farm Insurance sells home, life, auto, and health insurance. The company was actually begun by Les Kruis in the mid-1950s when his office was in his home on Elm Street. In the mid-1970s Les bought a home owned by Leon Walvoord and remodeled the building for his new office. Brian Gesch later purchased the business and began serving as an agent for the State Farm Insurance group in 1986. In 1994 the office was enlarged to include additional office space for rent.

### **Barber Shops and Beauty Salons**

A Cedar Grove Business Directory, published with the February 10, 1900, edition of the *Sheboygan Herald*, stated:

*Certainly no village of any size can get along without a barber and in this line the wants of the public have been looked after by David Kommers, who has followed this vocation for over ten years.*

Another barber active in the trade during the 1930s and later was Peter DePagter. Peter also was a wholesale florist, raising prize-winning gladiola which he sold to flower shops in surrounding cities.

And then Cedar Grove had Ray and Jay. Ray VanderJagt came first, in the mid-1930s, and had a barber shop in the basement of



Citizens Bank on South Main Street. When Ray started his business in Cedar Grove, he moved into both the former residence and the former shop of the previous barber, Henry Idsinga. An interesting side note is that Ray VanderJagt's barber shop had showers available which men could use, for a fee of course.

Jay Schaap started barbering in the Leo Preisler building on the west side of South Main Street and then worked for over thirty-five years in a shop he built in 1947. The little barber shop is located on the east side of South Main Street just north of the present TerMaat and TeBeest Carpenters' building. In November of 1983, Jim Bowe moved into the Jay Schaap building, calling his business J.B. Comb and Shears. He continues there to the present, clipping and snipping to make the men who come to him look great.

Other barbers who served the village at one time or another include Art VanderWaal, John Lubach, Owen Russelink, and Johnny Kappers. In the early days no one made an appointment with a village barber. The men just went to the barber shop at their convenience and sat on long benches awaiting their turn. But they didn't sit silently, simply listening to the buzz of the clippers and the snip of the scissors. There were magazines to read and people to talk to. And the news passed around in the barber shops was perhaps as good as that disseminated in the local beauty salons.

Regarding beauty salons, pictures from long ago often showed unsmiling ladies with their hair parted neatly in the middle. If one of these women were to turn around, you would see a bun at the nape of her neck. Or perhaps she would have her hair long and braided with the braid wound around her head like a coronet. Some women even "teased" their hair in those days long ago. Or if a woman's hair was the least bit curly, she would wind it with cloth strips, with vertical curls being the result. Women did not have the time nor money in the early part of the 1900s to do much else.

There was at least one somewhat do-it-yourself alternative to straight hair in those days. A Marcel curling iron, heated in a kerosene lamp, would give the impression of row after row of waves. Needless to say, it was a time-consuming task and the waves were not permanent. To help keep the waves or curls last

a longer time, a waving lotion was used after shampoo. Early lotions were often made by boiling flax seeds until they turned thick and gel-like.

In the early 1940s the permanent wave machine (a tortuous thing) came into the beauty shops. With all of the hair bound up in rollers and attached with electric wires to the source of heat, one could become quite frizzled (and frazzled). When a roller was too close to the scalp, the beauty shop operator would simply use a fan to cool the spot.

The machineless permanent wave was a wonderful improvement. After the depression was over, more and more women went to a beauty shop once or twice a year. The more affluent may have had their hair “done” every week! Today a trip to the beauty shop is a much more common occurrence, and many men even frequent the shops for a perm or style.

In the Village of Cedar Grove, Bernice Ramaker’s Marquita Beauty Shop wins the honor of being in business longer than anyone else. Bernice started her shop in 1945, and was one of the businesses that advertised in Cedar Grove’s official centennial booklet in 1947. For many years, Bernice’s beauty shop and her husband Kelly’s electronics shop shared the lower level of the building just north of the present Dutch Crust Bakery. Bernice has been arranging the hair of the fairer sex for fifty-two years and she is not finished yet. What a record!

Another beauty shop which is still in operation was started in 1961 by Vera Lammers. It was called Mi Lady, and this salon is located on the corner of Center Avenue and Third Street. It continued under Vera’s management until 1970. In 1970 the salon changed hands when Maria Meke began Fashion Flair where she continues to the present.

Another hair stylist and owner-operator who has a beauty shop in Cedar Grove is Mary Smithers. Having worked in Port Washington previously, she added a room to the rear of the Smithers’ home on First Street and began operating the Mary Smithers Salon in 1972.

The newest hair salon in Cedar Grove is Shear Imagination. Started on December 12, 1985, this family operated business has Lynnette Johnson and Luann Ebberts-Bruggink as its operators. Eleven years after it opened Shear Imagination was remodeled

and doubled in size with skylights and a beautiful new decor. It continues under the management of Randy and Lynnette Johnson and LuAnn Ebbers-Bruggink. To keep up with the current trends, the full-service salon at 35 East Cedar Avenue has added manicures and a completely new tanning facility.



Stock Fair, Which Later Become Known as the Pig Fair, During the Early 1900s  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

## - Chapter Ten -

# Business and Industry

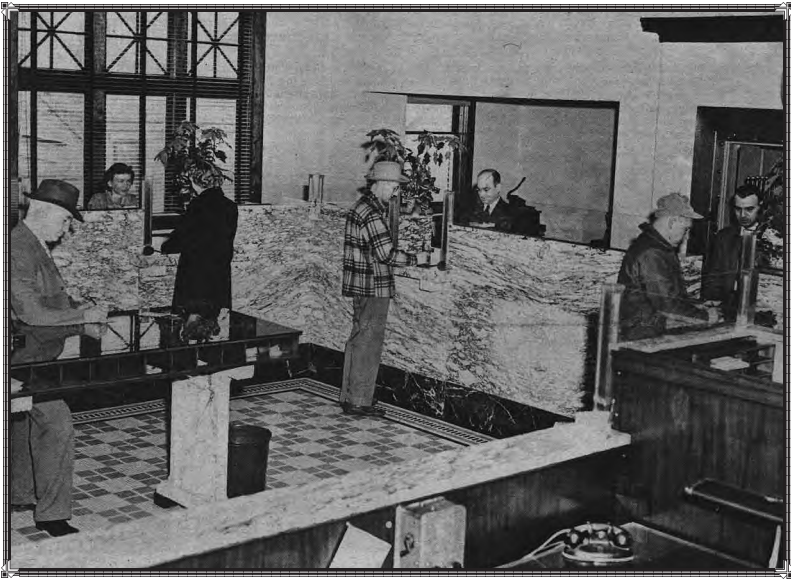
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**A**s with the previous chapter, the information presented here can help provide insight into the changing face of business and industry in the Cedar Grove area. By comparing present-day business and industry to that of the past, as documented in a 1900 Cedar Grove Business Directory and in Cedar Grove's 1947 centennial booklet, one will be able to see how local businesses have changed over the past one-hundred years.

Please understand that it is impossible to discuss every business that existed in the Village of Cedar Grove over the past 150 years. While many past businesses having unique historical significance are included in this chapter, it is not the intention of this book to cover every business that ever existed within the village. Most discussions relating to past businesses are included to help readers understand how Cedar Grove's business and industry have changed over the years. Please note that discussions relating to present-day businesses will be limited primarily to full-time businesses that advertise. Please also note that the businesses discussed in this chapter will be those located within the Village of Cedar Grove and those within one-half mile, by car, of the nearest village limit.

### **Village Banks**

The Cedar Grove State Bank, which was organized in October of 1901, was the first rural bank in Sheboygan County. During its first year in business, while a building was being constructed, the bank operated in a portion of what later became the Cedar Grove Hardware Company. The first bank building was completed in 1902 on land that had been purchased from Garret Lammers.



Interior of Citizens Bank in Approximately 1950  
(Photo Courtesy Con Poppe)

Bank Tellers L-R: Marilyn Westerbeke, Willis Renskers & Con Poppe

That building, which presently houses Claerbout Furniture, served as the bank's headquarters for approximately eighteen years.

At the bank's annual meeting in 1919, it was noted that the first building could no longer meet the bank's needs, and it was decided to proceed with the construction of a new bank building. The new building was constructed just north of the original bank and was a very impressive structure. The new facility first opened for business in February of 1921. The exterior of the building was finished with pressed brick and Bedford stone. The bank's lobby was faced with marble, and the floor was inlaid with Carthage marble. The bank's two-story vault is believed to be the only one of its kind in the state. Bank officials went out of their way to impress upon the public that the new building was more than just a bank—it was a "public institution." The bank provided several small meeting rooms for the public on its main floor, and the bank's mezzanine area could be used by the public free of charge for gatherings of up to 100 people.

According to a pamphlet describing the building at the time of its opening, the new bank included several other unique features

as well. The basement included a barber shop, two shower stalls, a ladies' hair dressing room, and two bowling alleys. The shower stalls were available for a fee to those who had no such facilities at home, and the bowling alleys were there "not as much for profit as for amusement." A small fee was charged to cover the bowling alleys' operating expenses. The upstairs of the building, which had its own entrance from the street, included a "modern and up-to-date dental parlor," operated by Dr. Arnie Duenk.

Cedar Grove State Bank merged with Citizens Bank on April 6, 1933, and operated under that name for over fifty years, nearly all of those years at the bank's Main Street location. In 1982 the bank moved to its present facilities on East Union Avenue to improve access as well as to provide off-street parking, drive-in banking, and a ground-level entrance.

On August 14, 1984, Citizens Bank entered into a franchise agreement with First Interstate Bancorp of California and changed its name to First Interstate Bank of Wisconsin. In 1990 the bank was acquired by Norwest Bank, Minnesota and officially changed its name to Norwest Bank Wisconsin N.A.

Over the last half-century the local bank has been managed by just three different individuals. Con Poppe, who started working at the local bank as a cashier in 1928, retired as a branch manager in 1965. From 1965 until his retirement in January of 1989, the bank was managed by LeRoy Winkelhorst. Wayne Bruggink has been managing the bank at its East Union Avenue location since 1989.

On November 12, 1990, the old brick bank building on South Main Street came back to life as the Cedar Grove Branch of Adell State Bank. The bank's name was changed to the Cedar Grove Branch of the National Exchange Bank in November of 1995 when the Adell State Bank and its branches were purchased by that group. Jeff DeSmidt was hired as a branch manager when the branch bank first opened in 1990 and continues in that position to this day.

### **Auto Dealerships and Service Stations**

As soon as cars replaced horses on the streets of Cedar Grove, filling stations and auto repair shops began to flourish. One of the first service stations in the village was the Wynveen & TeLindert Garage on the southwest corner of Main Street and Blank Avenue. The business, which started in approximately 1925, was





Garret Wynveen and George TeLindert at their South Main Street Service Station During the Late 1920s  
(Photo Courtesy Con & Nancy Otte)

operated in a wood frame building that had previously served as a blacksmith shop for Garret Wynveen and Ferdinand Meengs. At that site Garret Wynveen and George TeLindert sold new Pontiac, Oakland, and Dodge automobiles, serviced all other makes of cars, and operated a blacksmith shop. The first automobile sold at that service station was purchased by Antoinette Lewis. Her new automobile soon became a major attraction to all of her neighbors.

In the late 1930s the service station became known as the George TeLindert Garage when Garret Wynveen left the business to run a small blacksmith shop behind his house on South Main Street. The business continued as the TeLindert Garage until George went to work for Optenberg Iron Works in Sheboygan in the mid-1940s. Shortly thereafter the old frame building was torn down and a concrete-block building was constructed by Harley Meerdink and Harold Meinen to start Cedar Grove Block and Construction Co. That same block building is presently being used by J. M. Bruce Foundry.

The building on the northeast corner of South Main Street and

County Highway RR was built by Harry Huenink in the early 1920s and was operated as a service station for the next several decades. Hank Mertel is known to have managed the service station for a time during the 1930s, and Les Cole is known to have worked there during the 1930s as well. Since the 1950s, the same building has served as business headquarters for Service Welding Co. and Great Lakes Plastics.

The northwest corner of Main Street and Wisconsin Avenue was the site of another early repair shop, filling station and outlet for Buick cars. The business was owned by Henry Houmes during its early years. Later Lester DuMez purchased the business and operated it alone for a short time before Les Lemke joined him in partnership. Thereafter the service station was referred to as "Les and Les." They became authorized dealers for Chevrolet automobiles and sold Wadhams gasoline (which eventually became Mobil), with the flying horse logo. Later Allan Dirkse bought the business and operated it for a short time. He then rented the building out, first to Howard TeStroete from 1968 to 1969 and then to Walter Frazier for a brief time after that. Paul DeMaster rented the facility from 1971 until 1973 before starting



Cedar Grove's Main Street in Approximately 1920  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

Double-A Auto Body in Oostburg. Allan then sold the building for a modest sum to the Sheboygan County Christian High School Parents Club who sold gas and operated the Good As New Shop, a resale store, with all profits going to the Christian High School. The Good As New Shop is still in business and is open several days a week.

DeZwaan Restaurant was not always a place to go dining. The building, which was constructed in the early 1920s, was used as a service station and automobile dealership for many years before it became a restaurant. Throughout much of its history it was known simply as the Ford Garage. The first owners of the business are believed to have been Joe Hesselink and a Mr. Lemke. The next owner was Harry Huenink who ran it for a short time. Harold Holle then sold gasoline there from about 1933 to 1935. While Harold sold gas from the rear of the building, the front part of that building was a Gambles Store run by Herb Molter. Many years later, from 1967 to 1989, a different Gambles Store was operated by Mr. and Mrs. Ed Rydz in the former Hank Boehm Harness Shop building just north of the Marquita Beauty Shop.

After Harold Holle discontinued the gas station business, Henry (Heinie) Harmeling bought the building for use as a gas station, repair shop, and outlet for Ford cars. When the Harmelings moved to Florida, a new owner took over briefly, but he soon sold the business back to Henry Harmeling who had returned from Florida. Harmeling continued in the business until Keith Bruggink replaced him. Keith carried on selling new and used cars as well as selling gas and doing repairs until the business was discontinued in about 1970.

A Standard Gas and Oil Station was started in the mid-1930s by Harold DeMaster. The business was located where the GTE building now stands. Both Harold and his wife Hattie worked in the station, and one would often see Hattie at her ironing board or sewing machine waiting for customers to arrive. She would help the customers as there were no self-service pumps in those days. Ed Mentink became the next owner in 1946 and he was followed by his son Ron Mentink. The filling station was later operated by Keith Bruggink, then Keith and Dale Bruggink, then Dale Bruggink alone and finally by David Mentink before the station closed in the late 1960s.

During the 1950s two new service stations were built in the Cedar Grove area. The idea for one of these businesses, M&R Motors, was actually conceived at a bowling alley in Random Lake in 1952. Marvin Kaland and Roger Grotenhuis, who each had experience in the automotive field and had a desire to own a business, agreed between frames that the time was right to begin the joint venture. Initially Marv and Roger intended to build their new service station on the west side of the soon to be rebuilt U.S. Highway 141 where Navis & DeBlaey storage units presently stand. The two soon realized, however, that the highway would split at that point and they would probably only get business from southbound traffic. Because of this fact, they decided to move their service station slightly southward to capitalize on both lanes of traffic. M&R Motors opened for business in October of 1953. Within a year Glen Prinsen joined the duo on a part time basis, and in 1959 Norman Glander began working there as well. All four of these men worked together until Marvin and Roger sold the business to Jeff Kritz in September of 1985. At that time the service station was renamed M&R Super Service.

A large, imposing building on the corner of Main Street and Union Avenue, which had over the years housed businesses including a hotel, dance hall, saloon, meat market, and print shop, was razed in 1955 to make way for a new Shell Service Station. The business was started by Ralph Voskuil and Carl Huibregtse, both of whom previously worked for Bolens Manufacturing Co. in Port Washington. Ralph and Carl ran Shell Service continuously for over thirty-nine years. For approximately twenty of those years, Carl's son Dean worked in the Shell Station as well. In 1995 the corner location was sold to Scott Krizek, Bill Bowles, and Mike Schueller who transformed the business into a self-service gas station and mini-mart called Union Station. At that same time Dean Huibregtse built a new service station and used-car dealership on Commerce Street and presently operates it as Cedar Grove Auto Center.

Hy-Way Transit, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been operating in the Cedar Grove area for many years. The business was incorporated in 1974. The company's main business is the transportation of food products. On July 1, 1986, the business moved from its original location west of Cedar Grove to its present

site at N905 Sauk Trail Road. It was at this time that Hy-Way Service Center became a branch of Hy-Way Transit. Hy-Way Service Center is a self-service gas station and convenience store that prides itself on friendly service and convenient hours.

DeRuyter Auto Body was built in 1968 by Norman DeRuyter. Norman owned and operated the business for twenty-one years, specializing in major collision repair. Some of the men who worked for Norm over the years include Jim Neerhof, Mark TeGrotenhuis, Dale and Mark VanEss, and Norman's son Jon DeRuyter. From 1968-1972 Norm also sold and serviced snowmobiles. Throughout the 1980s DeRuyter Auto Body did the body work, painting, and aerodynamics on a Winston Cup car for Mueller Brothers Racing Team. In 1989, because of a career change into sales, Norm began to rent the shop out. Today the same building serves as an auto body repair shop under the name Cedar Grove Collision.

### **Otte Bus Service**

In April of 1968, Cornelius and Nancy Otte, and Ray and Ruth Otte, purchased twenty-seven school busses from Mrs. William Vanderbilt of Van's Bus Service in Adell, Wisconsin. Immediately after that, school bus routes were operated for the Cedar Grove School District, Oostburg School District, and the Adell portion of the Random Lake School District. By 1970 the Ottes limited their bus lines to the Cedar Grove and Oostburg School Districts with Cornelius operating the Cedar Grove district and Ray operating the Oostburg district.

Many aspects of the transportation business were familiar to Nancy Otte right from the start since her father, George Te Lindert, had operated a service station in Cedar Grove and was one of the first businesses in the area to sell new cars. George sold Pontiacs, Oaklands, and Dodges, and usually had to teach the buyers how to drive them. George was very helpful to Cornelius and Ray as they learned how to maintain their fleet of busses.

In 1974 Otte Bus purchased a ten-year-old, forty-one passenger "Greyhound" motor coach with one-million miles on it. With the acquisition of this coach, church groups and other organizations suddenly had a far more comfortable ride for their outings. This first coach initiated the tour division of Otte Bus Service. A

second used Greyhound coach was purchased in 1976 and tours were expanded with Nashville being a favorite destination. Since then Otte's motor coach line has been updated and modernized to include some of the industry's latest innovations. Present tour destinations include Florida, Nova Scotia, the Canadian Rockies, Arizona and, of course, Branson, Missouri. Over the years Otte Bus Service has provided a significant amount of free advertising for the Village of Cedar Grove because the village's name and a painting of "DeVisch" windmill appear on all of Otte's coaches.

In 1978 Cornelius and Nancy bought out Ray and Ruth to become sole owners of Otte Bus Service. In 1993, which was the 25th anniversary of the company, "the little yellow school bus," which charms so many spectators, was introduced into the Holland Festival parade. David Otte and his wife Carol presently operate the school bus division of Otte Bus Service. Their son Rick recently joined the staff as a mechanic, so a third generation is now involved in the business. Otte Bus Service sees its school bus drivers, who have been loyal for so many years and who drive in all kinds of inclement weather, as the company's greatest assets.

### **Canning Factory**

For much of the twentieth century, the local canning company provided area youth with their first real jobs. Whether working in the fields or in the factory, area teens could earn extra money for college or to buy their first car. The canning factory actually began as the Dutch Canning and Pickling Company in 1908. The business became known as the Calumet Dutch Packing Company in 1930, the Larsen Company in 1967, and Dean Foods in 1986. And while the business name changed over the years, its product stayed relatively constant. For nearly a century the company harvested, processed, and packed locally-grown vegetables for distribution throughout the country. While most available jobs there were seasonal in nature, labeling and shipping continued on a year-round basis.

Sadly, Dean Foods announced its plans to close the Cedar Grove plant following the 1996 growing season. So a local industry with nearly a century of service closed its doors, presumably forever. The plant closing was the last piece of a comprehensive





"Pea Pickers" at the Dutch Canning and Pickling Co. During the Early 1900s

(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

Back-Row: Frieda Wieberdink, Grace Huenink, Josie Prinsen, Unknown, Alice Dana

Middle-Row: Florence Nyenhuis, Unknown, Anna DeZoute, Ellen Prinsen, Mrs. Holle

Front-Row: Unknown, Heneretta TeStroete, Sadie DeBruine, Effie Morrell

plan to consolidate Dean Foods' eight vegetable processing plants into four. The closing not only affected the local plant's twenty-two full-time and hundreds of seasonal employees, but many local growers as well.

### Foundries

A group of local investors established the Wisconsin Foundry & Steel Works in 1899. According to Wilmer Holle, whose family worked in the local foundry practically from the start, one of the company's original products was an automobile jack to be used in the fledgling transportation industry. Apparently the jacks did not work very well, though, and that portion of the business did not last long. It has also been reported in the past that the foundry built engine-powered buggies at one time, but this assertion could not be confirmed by Mr. Holle.

Within a few years the foundry started producing wood-burning kitchen ranges with three different styles of bases and a considerable amount of chrome surface area. Apparently this product was also fairly short-lived because housewives tired of polishing and buffing their ranges. The company's name was changed to





Wisconsin Foundry & Steel Works During the Early 1900s  
(Photo Courtesy Harvey VanEss)

L-R: Lawrence Brasser, William Nyenhuis, William Potts, Henry Schreurs,  
Dan Holle, Ben Schreurs, Henry Weavers, John Plekenpol, Nicky Jungers

the Cedar Grove Stove Co. when a Mr. Putnam moved here from Canada to produce an entirely different kind of cook stove. Very few were produced, however, and once again the business failed. Both the Putnam stove and one of the previously produced ranges are on display at the local museum.

At one time during the very early 1900s, the foundry is said to have supplied portions of the village with direct-current electricity. The energy was stored in hundreds of batteries while the foundry was in operation and was available for use between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m. At 10:55 p.m. electric lamps would be made to flicker, thus alerting villagers who were still awake that they should light their kerosene lanterns because the electricity would soon be shut off. Even the street lights used this power.

During the 1920s a coaster wagon company was purchased by the owners of the local foundry, and many wagons were produced as promotional items. The Louisville Gazette awarded these wagons as prizes in a subscription contest for their newspaper, and a

local grocer gave them to customers who purchased a certain amount of groceries.

The next owner of the local foundry was the Schwab Furnace Co. This company built a large addition to the plant where they made cast iron and sheet metal parts for their furnaces. The furnace company's dealers then purchased parts directly from the foundry and assembled the furnaces for their customers.

In 1941 the business was purchased by Edward M. State and was renamed State Foundry. Mr. State discontinued production of the furnace castings at that time. As a result, several employees left State Foundry to start Gilt Edge Foundry where the Schwab Furnace parts began to be manufactured.

During the 1940s and 1950s all the pig iron, coke, and sand required to make castings at State Foundry were delivered to the plant by train, and employees or high school boys would unload the railroad cars. Workers were paid approximately fifteen dollars for emptying these cars which involved shoveling the sand into wheelbarrows or tossing fifty-pound pigs (ingots) of iron into storage sheds. Pig iron is no longer used today, and the scrap iron and sand that are used are delivered by truck on a daily basis.

State Foundry continued as a producer of grey iron castings until 1949 when it was the first Wisconsin foundry to produce ductile iron. Until the mid-1960s the melting process was done with a cupola. Then with the purchase of electric induction furnaces the foundry achieved a melt capacity of more than fifty tons a day and could provide castings with weights ranging from just ounces to over 30,000 pounds. During the 1960s, the J. M. Nash Co. purchased the foundry and then resold it to Medalist Industries. In 1987 Clay Willman, who had been with the company for several years, purchased the business, and today it is known as Willman Industries, Inc.

J.M. Bruce Foundry was established in 1919 by James Maxwell Bruce who emigrated from Scotland in 1900. James' father had operated a foundry in Scotland while the family lived there. Mark Q. and Glenn Bruce became partners in their father's business in 1946. The foundry produces grey iron, semi-steel, and alloyed castings. During World War II the foundry manufactured winches for naval boats. The foundry had also contracted with the government to make hand grenades, but the war ended

before that project got under way.

Following Mark's passing in 1982, Glenn Bruce became sole owner of the foundry. The business was eventually sold but presently retains the name of J.M. Bruce Foundry.

Gilt Edge Foundry was started in the mid-1940s by a group of area men including Allen and Roland DeMaster, Harold Harmelink, Audley Holle and Tres Jentink. The foundry operated on East Union Avenue in a building that had formerly housed the Gridley Dairy Company. Financial backing for the foundry was obtained from the Mills family of Milwaukee who also owned the Schwab Furnace Co. Schwab Furnace was looking for a new foundry to make the cast iron doors and grates that State Foundry discontinued. The Mills family purchased the property and building and remained the major stockholder until the business closed. Gilt Edge Foundry was known as a "jobber" foundry for grey iron castings. The company specialized in small production runs and unique castings which larger foundries were not interested in producing.

Gilt Edge Foundry closed in 1983. The building was torn down and the property is currently the home of Lakeshore Cabinetry. Gilt Edge is gone but not forgotten. The foundry is remembered by many area residents as a place they worked part time, nights, or summers "shaking out" to earn a little extra money for their family or for a college education.

### **Cooperative Exchange**

The Cedar Grove Cooperative Exchange was established in 1915 and still serves many of the same family names it served over eighty years ago. While the number of local dairy farms has decreased over the years, present day farms are much larger in size. And while the number and size of area farms has changed over the years, the products and services provided by the Co-op has remained relatively constant. Those products and services include animal feed, agronomy products, petroleum, grain drying, and hardware.

On February 1, 1929, fire destroyed the Co-op's feed mill as well as an adjacent grocery store and hardware store along the west side of South Main Street. A concrete feed mill was then built. In 1957 fire struck again, the result of a collision between

a freight train and a tank truck filled with 6,000 gallons of fuel oil. Once again the Co-op made the necessary repairs.

When the Cedar Grove Meat Market, which was located just south of the present Co-op office, closed in approximately 1970, the Co-op bought the property and tore down the building that stood on it. The Co-op then used that site for its warehouse.

Kettle Lakes Cooperative was established on August 1, 1994, when four area Cooperative Exchanges consolidated. Kettle Lakes now has approximately fifty employees in its Cedar Grove, Belgium, Boltonville, Plymouth, Random Lake, and Sheboygan Falls branches. The company serves people in Sheboygan, Ozaukee, Washington, and Manitowoc counties. Kettle Lakes Cooperative continues the tradition established by the early Cedar Grove Cooperative Exchange as a business organized by individuals to help themselves. The Cooperative Exchange is member-owned and controlled to supply its customers with the goods and services they need.

### **Grove Charcoal**

Grove Charcoal began as a hobby for Milford and Wayne Grotenhuis. It all started in 1957 when Milf tried to figure out some use for all of the hardwood going to waste on their 200 acre farm. He built a small kiln out of a discarded hot water heater and started making charcoal for his bratwurst-loving family. Following this introduction, neighbors, relatives, and friends began requesting charcoal so Milf and Wayne decided to build larger kilns on their property just southwest of the village. After years of having their product “go up in smoke,” Milf and Wayne sold Grove Charcoal to Phil and Mary Fox in 1984.

### **Lumber Companies**

For many years Pantzer Lumber Company, which was headquartered in Sheboygan, operated a branch office in Cedar Grove. For much of that time the business was located at the Main Street railroad crossing and used an old grain elevator as its primary warehouse. In the mid-1960s, Pantzer Lumber closed its Cedar Grove operations and a new lumber company was formed. Cedar Grove Lumber Company was founded in October of 1966 by Marvin VanderJagt and Alfred Eernisse. The company's initial

employees were Ervin TenHaken, Marilyn Westerbeke, and Don Schreurs. After Alfred Eernisse passed away in the early 1970s, Don Schreurs became a partner with Marvin VanderJagt, and when Marvin passed away in 1987 Don Schreurs became the sole owner of Cedar Grove Lumber.

As the company grew over the years so did its staff. By the late 1970s Todd Kruis and Mark Hesselink helped form a door and window sash division within the company. For many years this shop furnished the majority of the doors and window sashes installed in this area. In 1988 a lumber reloading center was established. This part of the business received lumber by rail and then loaded the lumber onto trucks for local distribution.

In 1993 Cedar Grove Lumber Company, including its door and sash department and its lumber reloading division, was purchased by Oostburg Lumber Company, Inc. While the business name changed at that time, it is still operated at the same Commerce Street location.

### **Shoe Factory**

In late 1923 construction of a brand new, state-of-the-art shoe factory began on the northeast corner of Second Street and Wisconsin Avenue. Apparently the building was for expansion of a business that had been taken over by new investors earlier that same year. According to information available at the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center in Sheboygan Falls, the shoe manufacturing company thrived under new management. Production increased from just fifty pairs of shoes per day immediately after acquiring the business to 600 pairs per day by the end of the year. At that time the business moved from a small manufacturing facility at some unspecified location to the site of the old post office which is believed to have been a building just south of the present Claerbout Furniture Store. Production apparently continued there until the new facility was completed. According to information available at the Historical Research Center, the new shoe factory was expected to employ more than 125 people with a production capacity of 1200 pairs of shoes daily.

It appears that the new shoe factory's initial success was relatively short-lived, however, and by the early 1930s the disastrous effects of the Great Depression forced the Cedar Grove Shoe



Musebeck Shoe Company During the 1970s  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

Manufacturing Co. to close its doors. In 1936, after the relatively new shoe factory building had been vacant for several years, a group of five local businessmen formed the Community Corporation and set out to revive the local shoe manufacturing business. Through this group's initiative the Huth and James Shoe Manufacturing Co. of Milwaukee soon moved its operations to the Cedar Grove plant. In 1944 the Huth and James Co. returned to Milwaukee and the Musebeck Shoe Co. moved to Cedar Grove from Danville, Illinois. The Musebeck Shoe Co. continued production in the Cedar Grove plant until closing the facility in the late 1980s. Following plant closure, the shoe factory building was razed, and several apartment buildings were constructed on the site.

### **Carpentry and Construction**

Huenink Brothers Construction was established in August of 1985 by Phillip and David Huenink following the retirement of their father LeRoy from the family-owned business. Phillip and David brought approximately forty-three years of construction experience with them into the partnership and became the third generation of Hueninks to own a construction company. Phil and Dave's grandfather Dirk Huenink started a carpentry business in 1936. When LeRoy, the oldest of Dirk's three sons, joined the business in 1950, the business name was changed from Dirk Huenink, Carpenter to Dirk Huenink and Son. After Dirk's death

in 1958, LeRoy became sole proprietor and renamed the business LeRoy Huenink, Carpenter Contractor. Phillip and David worked for LeRoy until his retirement in the early 1980s.

Presently Huenink Brothers Construction concentrates on single-family and multi-family residential construction as well as light commercial. The brothers have developed a residential subdivision on the southwest side of Cedar Grove. The subdivision's main thoroughfare is appropriately named Huenink Avenue in honor of their grandfather, father, and other prominent Hueninks who have been instrumental in the growth and development of Cedar Grove.

Navis Custom Builders, Inc. is owned and operated by John Navis of Cedar Grove. The business actually had its roots in Daane Building Service which was run by John's father-in-law Harold Daane. John started working for Harold upon graduation from high school in 1964. After a stint in the army John returned to Daane Building Service, whose office and shop were located along South Main Street. When Harold retired in 1975, John purchased the business and asked Lloyd TerMaat to become a partner. The joint venture became Navis & TerMaat Builders, Inc., a partnership that continued until 1990. During that time Navis and TerMaat purchased twenty-six acres of farm land west of Main Street on the southern end of the village, with plans to develop it some day.

In 1990 Navis and TerMaat Builders, Inc. was dissolved and John started Navis Custom Builders. One year later John bought out Hilbelink and TenHaken Builders and moved his operations to 230 North Commerce Street. At that time Elwood TenHaken started working with John and his other employees. In 1992 John built sixteen storage units which he rents out on a monthly basis. In 1993 Navis Custom Builders incorporated, and in 1995 John purchased the Cedar Grove Block and Construction Company from Glenn Meerdink and Earl Meinen, who had previously purchased Warren Heinen's share of the business. At that time the Block and Construction Company's name was changed to Cedar Grove Construction LLC.

In 1996 John began developing the twenty-six acres of farm land that had been purchased earlier. Navis' Rolling Meadows subdivision is being completed in two phases with the first phase



ready for occupancy. Streets within the subdivision are named for previous owners of the farm land, dating back to the 1800s. Navis Custom Builders, Inc. is a family run business with John's son Dan also working in the trade.

Lammers Drywall and Construction was founded by Chuck Lammers in 1989. By the time he started his own business, Chuck had sixteen years experience in the drywall industry. The business provides complete drywall service with different types of textures, and specializes in round-nose corners and base trim.

TerMaat and TeBeest Builders, Inc. was established in June of 1990 by company owners Lloyd TerMaat and Dennis TeBeest. The company purchased their present shop on South Main Street from Cliff and Shirley Sager who had previously published the weekly *Villager* there. The building has since been remodeled to include a beautiful Dutch gable. The company presently builds new houses as well doing major remodeling projects and roofing and siding jobs.

Richard Navis and Wayne DeBlaey started Navis & DeBlaey Mason Contractors on April 19, 1991. The business is located at 784 Highway LLL in Cedar Grove. The business includes nineteen storage units attached to the north end of the building. Navis and DeBlaey install concrete driveways, sidewalks, patios and basements, as well as building fireplaces and doing other ornamental brick and stone work.

Lakeshore Cabinetry, at 119 East Union Avenue, was operated in a basement, in a garage, and eventually in a larger facility behind the garage before it moved to its present location in the mid-1990s. Prior to going into business, Jeff Broetzmann and Terry Prinsen moonlighted for several years doing jobs for neighbors and friends. When they saw how well their work was received, they decided to make it a full-time business. Their company's 86-foot by 110-foot structure on the site of the former Gilt Edge Foundry includes a production area, a finishing area, and a spacious, attractive showroom.

### **Plumbing and Heating**

Wayne Ruesink started his plumbing apprenticeship on July 1, 1945. He initially worked for his father in the plumbing and heating business known as John Ruesink & Son. Wayne took over the

business in March of 1957 after his father passed away. When Wayne took over the business, Ruesink Plumbing and Heating was located on Main Street in the present museum building. He built a new shop on Commerce Street in March of 1976 and operated the business there until July of 1996. Wayne is now semi-retired, operating the business from his home.

In 1950 George Ebbers purchased the present hardware store, as well as the sheet metal business that was run in the basement of the store, from G.H. Ebbers and Sons, Inc. At that time separate accounts were established for the two businesses, with the second part of the business being named Grove Heating and Sheet Metal Co. In 1952 a partnership was formed between Harvey VanEss, who had worked in the hardware store's sheet metal business since 1948, and Carl Winkelhorst. At that time they purchased the sheet metal business from George Ebbers and continued to operate it in the basement of the hardware store.

In 1955 Harvey VanEss purchased Carl Winkelhorst's share of the business, and in 1961 Grove Heating moved to a new building east of the hardware store on Cedar Avenue. In 1977 the business expanded once again to provide a separate building for inventory and storage. Harvey VanEss operated the heating and air conditioning business until December 31, 1979, when it was sold to Allen Schreurs.

For many years Ernie Wieberdink and Ray Hilbelink worked in partnership as E&R Plumbing. Originally the plumbing business was operated from the basement of the Cedar Grove Hardware Company on the west side of South Main Street. Then in 1977 E&R Plumbing moved to a concrete block building on Commerce Street where Jim Waech had previously manufactured concrete tile. Roger Jentink, who worked for E&R Plumbing for many years, presently owns and operates the business from the Commerce Street location.

In 1995 Mark Wieberdink, who had worked for E&R Plumbing for many years, started a sole proprietorship known as Wiebe Plumbing.

### **Local Newspapers**

During the first half of the twentieth century, at least two local weekly newspapers were published for a time in the Cedar Grove

area. In about 1916, Louis Posekany and Charles Holesovsky published the *Cedar Grove Tribune* from their print shop on the southwest corner of Main Street and Union Avenue. By approximately 1918 publication of the weekly was discontinued, presumably to allow time for more profitable printing work. Another weekly, the *Cedar Grove Messenger*, was printed briefly as well, but very little background information has been found regarding this publication.

*The Villager*, a local weekly that was published by Cliff and Shirley Sager from the mid-1970s until the mid-1980s, appears to have been the most successful Cedar Grove publication to date. *The Villager* was tabbed as the “official historian” of this area, and such it has proved to be. The newspaper used old photographs as well as coverage of local school, business, and family functions to win the hearts of area readers. The paper was published in an office along the east side of South Main Street, which presently serves as the shop for TerMaat and TeBeest Builders.

While published in Oostburg, the *Lakeshore Weekly* has been faithfully appearing in Cedar Grove post office boxes for over forty years. The *Lakeshore Weekly* is a free weekly shopper that was first published by Warren Meyer in 1951. This publication is the first mail read by many area residents each Thursday morning as they look to see what bargains are available. The business, which was purchased by Ron Huibregtse in 1967 and then by Dan LeMahieu in 1983, presently has a circulation of approximately 3,700 throughout the area.

### Telephone and Telegraph

One of Cedar Grove’s first real links to the outside world was probably the telegraph station at the local railroad depot. The clickety-clack of Morse code allowed area residents to communicate with others who were hundreds of miles away. The local railroad depot is known to have had a telegraph office as recently as the 1940s, but no official record could be found regarding that last date this form of communication was available in Cedar Grove. Two of the last known operators of the local telegraph are Richard Ramaker and Paul Wilke.

The advent of the telephone brought a much more personal touch to communication in the Cedar Grove area. Unlike the big

business atmosphere of present telephone companies, early telephone exchanges began on a much smaller scale. Local telephone exchanges were often owned by individuals who ran the operation from their home or business. The exact date of Cedar Grove's first telephone exchange has not been determined, but the service is known to have been available to area residents by the late 1800s. An 1889 Sheboygan County Plat Book lists A.H. Schiereck as "manager of [the] Cedar Grove Telephone Exchange."

In later years the local exchange was owned and operated by Henry Huibregtse. At that time the telephone office was located in the front of his house south of the railroad tracks where the Larry Wieberdink family presently resides. Operators for the local telephone exchange at that time were Cena Jentink, Antoinette Lewis, Florence TenDollen, and a Mrs. Dingledein. Can you think of a better name for a telephone operator?

Eventually the switchboard was moved to a residence on the south side of Center Avenue just two houses west of Main Street. Telephone operators at that location included Mrs. Florence Lammers, Mrs. Dingledein, Plina Theune, Ruby DuMez, Agnes



Maryann Wisse Lammers at the Center Avenue Telephone Switchboard  
(Photo Courtesy Lamont and Maryann Lammers)

Winkelhorst Prange, Mary Soerens Ebbers, Shirley Caljouw TenHaken, and Maryann Wisse Lammers. Since telephone service had to be available around the clock, Mrs. Lammers slept in a bedroom adjacent to the switchboard.

One can envision an early local telephone operator equipped with a headset sitting at a panel full of wires as she connects and disconnects all those who wished to communicate with family, friends and business associates. On a slow day the operator could listen in on some very interesting conversations with perfectly good intentions to never repeat a word she heard.

Many older readers probably remember the large wooden box-like telephones that were usually secured to kitchen walls. In the early days most telephone subscribers were on “party lines” with each party along the line having its own unique ring. When the telephone rang with “two longs and one short” everyone knew whom the call was for. And while only the person with the designated ring was supposed to answer the call, many others along the line often lifted their receivers to hear what was going on. It is this mode of communication that probably gave birth to the now famous “Hollander Hotline,” allowing area news to travel through the village with amazing speed.

In the late 1950s the area’s old crank-style wall phones were replaced by dial telephones and electromechanical switching. These two modern advances made local telephone operators unnecessary. Within the last several decades party lines have become obsolete as well. But even though party lines and designated rings are relics of the distant past, news still travels very swiftly through the village.

## - Chapter Eleven - Public Library

A little library growing larger every year...is not  
a luxury, but one of the necessities of life.

H. W. Beecher

**T**he Cedar Grove Public Library was founded in 1944 by members of the Cedar Grove Book Club. The local book club was organized by thirteen area women who were interested in reading best sellers and exchanging the books that each had purchased. Initially, the book club met monthly. Charter members included Mrs. John Dees, Miss Sara Garside, Mrs. Lester Lemke, Mrs. Clara MacCaughey, Mrs. Edwin Mentink, Mrs. Con Poppe, Mrs. Harold Rolseth, Mrs. Mary Soerens, Mrs. Norbert Soerens, Mrs. William Theune, Mrs. Hannah VanderJagt, Mrs. B.J. Walfoort, and Mrs. Paul Wilke.

The Cedar Grove Book Club was formally organized on February 20, 1944, with Mrs. Paul Wilke, president; Mrs. Harold Rolseth, secretary; and Sara Garside, treasurer. Shortly thereafter, a committee was appointed to visit Mead Public Library in Sheboygan to seek advice on the acquisition and cataloging of books as well as on other library operations. On April 15, 1944, an agreement was signed whereby Mead Public Library would provide assistance in these areas for a fee of \$500. The first librarian appointed was Mrs. William Theune, a retired elementary school teacher. A committee was established to assist Mrs. Theune in purchasing books for the new library.

Book club members, wishing to ensure the establishment of the public library, began a fund-raising campaign. A complete canvassing of the village showed overwhelming support for the library project. Some of the larger donations included \$200 from



Cedar Grove Book Club Christmas Party  
(Photo Courtesy Cedar Grove Public Library)

Front-Row L-R: Grace Dees, Clara MacCaughey, Cynthia Walfoort, Jeanette Lemke, Mrs. Paul Wilke  
Back-Row L-R: Sara Garside, Jo Soerens, Mary Soerens, Mariett Poppe, Vera Mentink

the Cooperative Exchange, \$250 from the village board, furniture from Calumet Dutch Canning Company, and \$25 from the Ladies Aid of the First Reformed Church. An additional \$75 was raised through a card party, and many village residents donated their own books to the new library. Local bank officials offered a suitable room in the basement of the bank rent-free for six months.

On May 18, 1944, a “silver tea and inspection tour” was held to acquaint villagers with the Cedar Grove Public Library. The branch library officially opened just two days later with 900 books on its shelves. Of this total, 352 were donated by village residents while the rest were either purchased by Mead Library for Cedar Grove or were on six-month loan from the Wisconsin Traveling Library in Madison. The library had been set up to accommodate at least 2500 volumes. On that first day, 120 people registered for library cards.

Miss Barkman, Mead Public Library’s Director, was most cooperative and anxious to help as Cedar Grove became the first community in Sheboygan County to join with Mead in offering public library services. In 1944, Miss Barkman stated:



*Cedar Grove may justifiably have pride in its most recent civic development. The clairvoyance, the enthusiasm and perseverance of the thirteen women with whom the idea originated might well be an example to other literary isolated communities in the county. Establishment of the branch library in the village is a milestone in the progress of the community and gives indication of even greater advancement in the future.*

To keep the library financially sound, members of the local book club had to work very hard. Public programs were given for the benefit of the library. Two outstanding programs were the Mission House chorus program and a play, "Dear Daffodil," presented by the Oostburg Dramatic Club. Other fund-raising endeavors included several talent shows, paper drives, card parties, bake sales, and individual requests for monetary support. Through the latter means, a gift of \$1000 was received from the Kohler Company.

First-year statistics revealed 362 library card holders and an average weekly circulation of two-hundred volumes. By 1951 circulation reached 13,821 volumes and there were 867 card holders. Of those card holders, 150 were from the Town of Holland which by that time had entered into an agreement to help support the library. Since 1966 the Town of Belgium has also provided some support to the library.

A silver tea was held in 1954 to mark the tenth anniversary of the library. By this time the library had been expanded to include two rooms, one for the adult collection and one for the children's collection. Mrs. Con Poppe served as librarian from 1951 until 1958, and Mrs. Ed Mentink served in the same capacity from 1958 until 1961. Librarian certification was granted Josephine (Mrs. Norbert) Soerens in 1961, and she became the next librarian.

Growing pains in 1966 found the village coming to the rescue with the purchase of the former Pantzer Lumber Company office building just south of the railroad tracks on the east side of Main Street. Shortly thereafter, the library's collection of 6,113 books was moved by coaster wagon from the basement of the bank to the new location. On February 14, 1967, an open house was held at the library's new home.

For the first twenty-five years of the library's existence, local book club members served as members of the library board and controlled its operations. On October 14, 1969, however, book club members sent a letter to the village board stating that they could no longer serve in that capacity. The letter read as follows:

*After sponsoring the Library and acting as the official Library Board for the past 25 years, we the members of the Cedar Grove Book Club no longer feel able to act in this capacity. Our membership has been cut to only seven members, two of which are over 80 years of age. Therefore, we are tending this our resignation as the Library Board beginning January 1, 1970. During the past year, we have been forced to call on others to help us in our work. Mrs. LeRoy Bruggink, Mrs. James Jensen and Mrs. Josephine Ellarson have served on our book buying committee. Without the 100% cooperation of our very efficient librarian, Mrs. Jo Soerens, we could not have carried on as long as we did. We recommend that she continue in this capacity as she has the necessary certifications. We have enjoyed serving our community in this very worthwhile cause and hope that you appoint people interested enough in this project to keep up the high library standards we have tried to maintain.*

The letter was signed by Grace Dees, president; Jeanette Lemke, vice-president; Mabel Theune, treasurer; Vera Mentink, secretary and historian; Mary Soerens and Cynthia Walfoort, board members; and Jo Soerens, librarian. The village board accepted the resignation of the book club members and then appointed a new board to supervise the activities of the public library. Members of the board included Mrs. Grace Dees, president; Mrs. Vera Mentink, secretary; Mr. Bernard Huenink, Village Board representative; Mr. Charles Bingner, school district administrator; and Mrs. Margaret Voskuil. Meetings were held every other month. Jo Soerens was to serve as librarian and Nola Bruggink as the assistant to the librarian. The village board established a pay scale of \$1.70 per hour for the librarian and any helper in 1970. By 1972, the pay was increased to \$2.50 per hour. At Mrs. Soerens' request, a telephone was installed in the library in 1970. This request was made so that interlibrary loan transactions with Mead

Library could be expedited.

With the establishment of the Sheboygan County Federated Library System in 1979, the county finally reached the level of service Miss Barkman had hoped for in her 1944 speech. Now Cedar Grove residents could use any library in Sheboygan County without paying a user's fee. One of the biggest advantages of the new system was that the local library could have its cataloging done by staff at the Mead Public Library, thus saving both time and money. A formula was devised by the system so that individual libraries would be reimbursed for service to users residing outside of their area. The system was governed by an independent board, with directors of the individual libraries comprising a Technical Advisory Committee.

Cedar Grove's library circulation increased from 10,633 volumes in 1970 to 21,579 in 1982. By this time, the library was open on Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. and on Fridays from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Also by this time, Diana Nett was serving as the library director (since 1978), and Harriet Debbink and Betty Glewen were staff members.

As early as 1983, the village's library board began searching for a suitable new home for the library. Overflowing book shelves, narrow aisles, lack of a reading area, and no access for the handicapped were only a few of the reasons a new home needed to be researched. A professional study of the Main Street bank building, whose basement had served as the library's first home, showed that this location would not be feasible. Other site studies were done on the Masonic Lodge building and the former Corner Store, but neither of these buildings proved acceptable.

In late 1984 the village board approved the establishment of a Community Needs Study Committee to evaluate the present library and to determine its future needs. Members of that group included Richard Dykstra, chairperson; Larry Wieberdink, vice-chairperson; Elaine Scholl, secretary; and committee members Bev Randall, Dan Molter, Marge Ramaker, Nelda Voskuil, Peter DeSmidt, Roger Sandee, and Diana Nett. The committee prepared a questionnaire that was randomly distributed to 250 village residents through the mail. An amazing fifty-nine percent of the questionnaires were completed and returned. The results of the questionnaire showed that fifty-seven percent

of all respondents rated the then-current library facility “good” or “excellent,” but stated that further improvements could be made. Major areas requiring improvement as perceived by the public included the need for a better reading and study area, more parking space, more or different hours of service, a listening area for audio/visual materials, a computer for use by the public, and greater book selection. The Community Needs Study Committee’s final report was presented to the village board on April 8, 1985. At that time, the village board thanked the committee for its work and promised that the survey and its results would be kept for future reference.

In 1987 Sheboygan County and Ozaukee County libraries joined to create the Eastern Shores Library System. The establishment of this system enhanced the offerings of all participating libraries. Locally, programs were expanded to include Family Friday Flicks and a Grandparent Storytime. Interlibrary loan activities also increased. By 1990, library hours expanded to twenty-six hours per week. The library was then open each Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to noon and 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., and each Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

A twenty-eight-inch-tall stuffed mouse became the library’s official spokesperson in 1988. A contest to name her resulted in the selection of Mrs. Rita Story. To this day, Mrs. Story announces upcoming events and keeps a watchful eye over the day-to-day operations of the library. She resides with her faithful dog, Paige, at the circulation desk of the library. Apparel for Mrs. Story and Paige are the creation of Kathy Nock.

Also in 1988, the Friends of the Cedar Grove Public Library organized, with twenty-four charter members. Josephine Rocca, assistant director of Mead Public Library in Sheboygan, addressed the newly formed group at an early meeting to explain the importance and benefits of being a library “friend.” Since its inception, the Friends of the Cedar Grove Public Library’s newsletter, *Friend to Friend* has kept the group’s members aware of library and Friends happenings. Pat Premo has edited the newsletter from its beginning. Copies are sent to each Friends member and are also available at the circulation desk for interested library patrons and prospective library Friends.

At about the same time that the Friends of the Cedar Grove

Public Library organized, the village board established a building fund for a new library. For each dollar placed into the building fund annually by the new Friends organization, the village board agreed to provide up to \$2,500 in matching funds. To meet their end of the bargain, the local Friends group began the annual Pie in the Park social and a host of other fund-raising events. In a manner reminiscent of the original Cedar Grove Book Club, Library Friends members work very hard to ensure the best possible library service for our community. In addition to providing money for the building fund, the Friends continue to provide support for programming and purchasing materials.

In 1993 the village purchased the former elementary school complex on VanAltena Avenue. At that time, a decision was made to tear down the cafeteria, gymnasium, and older two-story structure of the complex and remodel the newer, east wing of the school for a new public library. Onen Wakefield was hired as architect and Jos Schmitt & Sons were named general contractors. Work on the new library project began in the fall of 1993 and was completed by the summer of 1994.

A headline in the July 14, 1994, *Sheboygan Press* proclaimed "Books Make Tracks; Children's Wagon Train Moves Library Into New Home Across Town." In just thirty minutes, the eighty-four-wagon train moved the children's collection to its spacious new home. Dedication of the new facility took place on Saturday, August 27, 1994.

The new library includes 11,000 square-feet of usable space, quite an improvement from the 875 square-feet of space on the first floor of the South Main Street location. Features of the library include a comfortable reading area, a display area for periodicals and newspapers, video racks, a public access computer, a large circulation and returns area, an inside book drop, adequate parking space, handicapped accessibility, and shelves and shelves for books. Connie Acker and Annette TenDolle have joined Diana Nett and Harriet Debbink on the library staff, and Debbie Seidl continues to serve as a regular volunteer.

A promise made by Mark Hesselink in 1988 was kept as his handcrafted model of the ship the *Phoenix* was put on display in the library foyer. The library building also includes a large Community Room which was provided by a generous donation



Interior of the Cedar Grove Public Library, 1995  
(Photo Courtesy Cedar Grove Public Library)

from the Cedar Grove Community Corporation. The library's activities are directed by a library board which meets monthly. Present library board members include Dr. Roger Klumb, school district administrator; Roger Sandee, village board representative; Linda Dykstra, Kathy May, Bev Randall, Pat Premo and librarian Diana Nett. The library is presently open weekdays from 10:00 a.m. until noon and 2:00-8:00 p.m., and Saturdays from 10:00 a.m. until noon.

## - Chapter Twelve - Fire Department

By Richard Lewis

### First Responders

By Bill May

#### Fire Department

**T**he Village of Cedar Grove has had a dedicated volunteer fire department since February 15, 1911, when nine men signed on at the department's organizational meeting. Those first nine firemen included Ed TeRonde, W. Neerhof, Jacob Lensink, W. Huenink, M.J. DeMaster, B. Mentink, H. Koeppe, G.W. Meinen, and W.A. DeSmidt. At that meeting G.W. Meinen was elected fire chief, Ed TeRonde was elected assistant chief, and W.A. DeSmidt was elected association secretary.

Within two weeks of the organizational meeting, fire department bylaws were written, amended, and then presented to the village board. At that special meeting of the village board, the amended fire department ordinances and bylaws were unanimously approved. At that same meeting it was recommended that the village purchase a fire bell to be placed in the village hall tower provided the committee could purchase a suitable bell at a price not to exceed twenty-five dollars.

According to the original bylaws, the president of the village board and the village treasurer were to be president and treasurer of the newly formed fire department. The officers of the fire department association were to serve as fire chief, assistant fire chief and secretary, and they were to be elected from the association's general membership on the first Monday in March each year. The bylaws also spelled out the duties of fire department officers and members.

The placement of equipment and how a fire alarm would be



sounded were also determined very quickly. Fire department equipment was placed at three different locations within the village: on the north side of Wynveen and Meengs' blacksmith shop, on the south side of the village hall, and on the north side of William Soerens' blacksmith shop. The equipment at each station consisted of two hooks, one ladder, one axe, and twelve pails. The equipment was marked "C.G.F.D." and "For Fire Only," and was not available for private use. Offenders were subject to a fine of five dollars for a first offense and ten dollars for each offense thereafter.

Every member of the new fire department pledged to sound the alarm as soon as possible in the event of a fire. First, one long alarm would be sounded to indicate that there was a fire somewhere. This was to be followed by two sharp rings with short stops for a fire south of the railroad tracks, three sharp rings with short stops for a fire from the railroad tracks to VanAltenas, and four sharp rings with short stops for a fire north of VanAltenas. False alarms were not treated lightly as a fine of five dollars was imposed for a first offense and ten dollars for any subsequent offenses.

By March of 1911, just one month after the group formally organized, the local fire department had over thirty members. Captains, lieutenants, and assistants were appointed for each of the three stations where department equipment was placed. A committee appointed to seek funds for the fire department was apparently very successful because a chemical truck was paid for very quickly, and additional funds were available to purchase a hand pumper, hoses, ladders, buckets, and any other equipment deemed necessary. Orders were given that buckets and ladders were to be in place by April 25th. The bell was supposed to be in place in the village hall tower by May 1, 1911, but this still had not been accomplished as of February 1912.

The officers of the department were instructed to have a ladder truck made as they saw fit. The reference to this piece of equipment as a truck was probably a misnomer since it was mentioned in later meeting minutes that the department was to select a place to build a shed for the hook and ladder wagon.

Money seemed to play a very important role in the operation of the early fire department. Initially a twenty-five cent fine was assessed to anyone who missed a regular meeting. In April of

1912, the department offered a two-dollar reward to whoever got his horse to the hand pumper and pulled it to the fire. It was also noted that a village resident by the name of Jack Weiler had to pay a fine of five dollars for sounding a false alarm. In August of 1913, the department voted on the purchase of three-hundred feet of hose at a price not to exceed sixteen-and-one-half cents per foot.

By 1914 fire inspections were required by law, and if a fire department made these inspections, it was entitled to share in the two percent dues paid by insurance companies to a fund distributed by the state. Inspections are carried out today for the same reason.

In 1917 the fire department deemed it necessary to reorganize, and the secretary published a notice in the *Cedar Grove Tribune* to all members of the local fire department. In January of 1918, the reorganization continued with new bylaws being presented to the membership. New officers were selected for the department's three chemical engines, the hand pumper, and the ladder wagon. At the same meeting the department voted to hold a benefit oyster supper for the fire department. This was done until 1932 when the menu was changed to roast beef. In later years pork was also a menu item. In 1942 this benefit supper was discontinued because of the war.

The village's annual Labor Day picnic started as a family picnic for fire department members in 1927. The next year it was opened to the public as a fund raiser. In 1933 big name entertainment was brought in for the picnic. That year the music was provided by the Cumberland Ridge Runners. In subsequent years entertainment was provided by the WLS radio barn dance program and included the Prairie Ramblers, Patsy Montana, Grace Wilson, Rusty Gill and his band, and Texas Tommy and his pony. An agreement was reached with the village board to finance the operation of the fire department beginning in 1960. While the annual Labor Day picnic continued for two decades beyond that point, the event was no longer sponsored solely by the fire department.

The fire department was always open to suggestions to help it function better. In 1912 a request was made to change the chemical engine so that it could be pulled instead of pushed. This was followed by a request in 1918 to have hooks placed on the handles of the chemical engines, the ladder wagon, and the pumper so they could be pulled by automobiles. In 1920 a question was

raised about getting a new chemical truck. Coinciding with this, the fire department sent cards to local farmers for their input on expanding the fire department protection area. This area was to extend two miles south, one-and-one-half miles north, two miles west, and east to the lake. These distances were probably measured from the fire house.

In October of 1921, the specifications for a new chemical truck were finalized. The fire truck was to have two forty-gallon tanks which were to be purchased from Peter Pirch of Kenosha. The two tanks were to be mounted on a one-and-one-quarter-ton REO Speedwagon with the total purchase price for the assembled unit listed as \$1,325. The new truck was to be paid for with subscriptions from village residents and local farmers. With the new truck ordered and subscription funds coming in, the Community Fire Truck Company was formed.

In preparation for the arrival of the new truck, fire department members H. Houmes, H. Lemke and G.W. Soerens were appointed to be drivers. The selection process was probably simplified somewhat by the fact that very few people knew how to drive a car or truck at that time. The new truck arrived in January of 1922, and by September of that same year it was determined that a siren was needed for the truck. The siren cost \$35.72, and a spotlight purchased at the same time cost \$6.25.

By August of 1923, a siren was purchased for the fire house at a cost of \$325 with an additional \$100 spent for two switches, one at the fire house and one at telephone central. The switch at telephone central allowed the operator to sound the siren for fires as well as at twelve noon each day. The siren was paid for by donations from the Town Wilson Fire Insurance Co. and the Town Holland Insurance Co. At about that same time a telephone was installed in the fire house.

In 1925 the fire department was asked about putting a pump on its truck for the purpose of pumping water. This was not done, however, until a later date. In 1926 a second chemical truck was purchased and the No. Two Chemical Truck Company was formed.

In February of 1929, the first multiple-alarm fire was faced by the Cedar Grove Fire Department. That fire damaged or destroyed numerous business establishments along the west side of Main Street, south of the railroad tracks. Cedar Grove did not

have a municipal water system until the early 1930s, so the 1929 fire was fought primarily with chemicals and with bucket brigades that obtained water from nearby wells. Units from Random Lake, Belgium, Oostburg, Kohler, and Sheboygan Falls assisted Cedar Grove at this fire. In March of 1929, a water pump was ordered for the REO fire truck, and by May the pump had arrived. Shortly thereafter the village also had a municipal water system which helped the local fire department immensely.

There was little additional change in the operation of the fire department until 1937 when a fire department committee met with Town of Holland officials to arrange a satisfactory agreement for furnishing fire protection to the township. This agreement was apparently completed sometime during 1940, but fire department records do not say exactly when. Also, in 1940 the local fire department removed the chemical tanks from the fire truck and replaced them with a water tank.

In 1945 the local fire department's name was changed from the Community Fire Truck Company to the Cedar Grove Fire Department which was to be an unincorporated association. The fire department then agreed to participate in the purchase of two new fire trucks with the fire department paying half. The balance was covered by the Community Fire Protection Association which was composed of subscribing members in the Town of Holland



Cedar Grove Fire Department Trucks During the Mid-1940s  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

and Town of Belgium immediately surrounding Cedar Grove.

In 1947 the Cedar Grove Fire Department suffered a setback that every fire department fears. There was a fire in the village hall building which also housed the fire department. The building was damaged beyond repair, so in October of 1947, the village board hired the Walter Schuman Construction Company of Kohler to build a new fire station at a cost of \$17,700. Upon completion of the new fire station, the fire department was requested to store an additional tanker for the Town of Holland. The fire department paid rent of \$500 per year to the village for use of the fire station until 1960 when the village offered to assume the cost of operating the fire department.

Over the years the Village of Cedar Grove and the Town of Holland have attempted to provide a modern, efficient fire department with up-to-date equipment and technology. The addition of new, larger equipment has occasionally resulted in the need to expand the fire station. In 1967 a committee was formed to determine the fire department's space needs. The end result of this committee's recommendations was an addition that provided space for two more fire trucks as well as space for meetings and training sessions.

By the late 1980s the additions of a four-wheel-drive grass-fire truck that had been purchased by the Town of Holland, a 750-gallon-per-minute pumper that was purchased by the Village of Cedar Grove, and two new tankers purchased by the Town of Holland (some of which replaced older, smaller equipment), meant that more space was needed once again. In 1991 the newest addition to the station was completed, thus providing space for two more trucks, a larger meeting room, a new kitchen area, new restrooms, an office for the fire chief, and additional storage space.

The fire department's newest truck was purchased jointly by the Village of Cedar Grove and the Town of Holland in 1994. This engine, which replaced a 1965 vintage truck, is equipped with a 1500-gallon-per-minute-pump, can hold 1000 gallons of water and has a fully-enclosed top-mount pump panel. With the agreement to split the cost of this engine, it was also decided to split the operating expenses of the fire department.

Over the years the local fire department has continued to



The Cedar Grove Fire Department's Newest Truck, Purchased in 1994  
(Photo Courtesy Cedar Grove Fire Department)

expand the services it provides. This has led to advanced training in first-aid and rescue and brought about the start of the First Responders and the 10-50 squad which answers calls for auto accidents and other situations where rescue tools are needed.

Since the Cedar Grove Fire Department was first organized in 1911, it has been served by 231 members, eleven of whom have served as chief. Those who have served as fire chief include G.W. Meinen, Ferdinand Meengs, J.P. Holle, G.W. Soerens, J.A. Huibregtse, William Huibregtse, Ray VanderJagt, Dale DeMaster, Richard Lewis, Gary TenHaken, and Greg Navis. During that same time period fifteen members have served as assistant chief, including Ed TeRonde, G.W. Soerens, William Huibregtse, Ray VanderJagt, Ray Hilbelink, Lester DuMez, Clarence TenHaken, Harvey VanEss, Dale DeMaster, Melvin DuMez, Phillip DuMez, Larry TeStroete, Richard Lewis, Gary TenHaken and Allan Holle.

The local fire department has always been concerned about the well-being of the Cedar Grove area and has trained its members to operate efficiently in the suppression of fires and the control of emergency situations. The present members of the Cedar Grove Fire Department look to the future and to new technologies that can be used to better serve the community.

## First Responders

The history of the Cedar Grove Rescue Squad must reflect the decade-long efforts of Larry TeStroete to bring this service to fruition. In 1973 Larry TeStroete, who had been an Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) since 1970, started working with what was then called the Oostburg Rescue Squad. Then by 1975 Larry TeStroete and Phil DuMez started responding to calls in the Cedar Grove area using their cars for transportation as they answered requests for emergency medical assistance. The two provided emergency care until additional assistance could reach the scene. If deemed necessary, an ambulance would be called to the scene for transporting those in need.

It is probably no secret that while Larry TeStroete and Phil DuMez were trying to organize a First-Responders group for emergency medical care, the leadership of the fire department was initially in a “we only fight fires” mind set. The local fire department’s membership was also divided over the issue, which made things even more sensitive. It has to be recognized that for Larry TeStroete and Phil DuMez, (whose father was assistant fire chief at the time), it was no walk in the park.

In May of 1978, the Cedar Grove Fire Department voted not to involve itself with the transporting of patients, but efforts to form a First-Responders group continued. Fire department meeting minutes from July of that same year indicate that a Lieutenant Ashley would be invited to speak about the First-Responders program.

By September 27, 1979, the Sheboygan County Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Council officially recognized the Cedar Grove Rescue Squad’s First-Responders group, and by October of 1980, the Cedar Grove Village Board agreed to pay for training courses relating to the program. By 1981 the Sheboygan County EMS Council had set standards for all First-Responder units in the area.

In July of 1981, the Cedar Grove Fire Department was approached by Bob DeRuyter, a member of the Village’s Fire, Law and Safety Committee, requesting that the First Responders be allowed to use the fire department van when answering calls for emergency medical assistance. Permission to use the van was granted by the local fire department in January of 1982 with the stipulation that it be driven by a fire department member.



By January of 1987, the Cedar Grove Fire Department began providing space for a rescue vehicle, and all members of the Cedar Grove Rescue Squad became eligible, through proper insurance coverage, to drive either a rescue vehicle or the fire department van. In July of 1987, using a memorial gift from the family of Mr. and Mrs. Walter DeRuyter, a new rescue vehicle was purchased.

In 1994 members of the Cedar Grove Rescue Squad became authorized to provide emergency heart-defibrillation services after completing state-approved defibrillation training courses. In 1997 the Cedar Grove First Responders continue to provide a very valuable community service, emergency medical assistance for those in need.



Cedar Grove Fire Station  
(Photo Courtesy Cedar Grove Fire Department)

## - Chapter Thirteen -

### Medical Professionals

#### Doctors

A great deal has been said and written about our nation's health care system. Amazing advances have been made over the years. But in spite of limited resources, a lack of laboratory facilities, and a limited supply of available medications, "horse-and-buggy" doctors in the very early years of our village performed a most necessary and welcomed service.

Over a span of approximately ninety years, three generations of the VanAltena family served the Cedar Grove area as general practitioners. The first of the three Dr. VanAltenas was Cornelius who was born and educated in the Netherlands. Dr. Cornelius VanAltena immigrated to the United States in 1849 when he was forty-seven years old. Dr. VanAltena lived and worked in Cleveland, Ohio, for three years before hearing about a young Dutch settlement in Wisconsin that had a pressing need for a physician. Following an initial solo journey to this area, Dr. VanAltena moved here with his family in approximately 1852. He served as a general practitioner in this area for about five years before moving to Milwaukee to establish a practice there.

The second Dr. VanAltena was Cornelius' oldest son Louis who was one of seven VanAltena children. Louis was born in the Netherlands in approximately 1829 and received his primary education in the province of Zeeland. He then studied medicine first in Utrecht, the Netherlands, and then in Cleveland, Ohio, where his family first settled after immigrating to the United States. After moving to the Cedar Grove area with his family in the early 1850s, Dr. Louis VanAltena worked with his father for several years and then established his own practice here when his father moved to Milwaukee. One interesting side note is the fact



Dr. VanAltena in his 1912 Model T Ford  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

that Dr. Louis VanAltena operated a farm for a time until his medical practice developed to the point where he no longer had time for farming. Dr. Louis VanAltena served as a general practitioner in the Cedar Grove area until the late 1890s.

The third Dr. VanAltena was Louis A. VanAltena, Jr. who was born in the Cedar Grove area in 1870. Dr. Louis VanAltena, Jr. first attended Rush Medical College in Chicago but received his degree from Marquette Medical College in 1895. Immediately after graduating from medical school, he took over his father's practice in this area. After initially using horses to make his rounds, Dr. VanAltena began to use an automobile for that purpose in approximately 1912. Reportedly, Dr. VanAltena's "Model T Ford" was one of the first automobiles in Cedar Grove. Dr. Louis VanAltena, Jr. served as a physician in this area until the early 1940s.

The Cedar Grove area appears to have had two or more practicing physicians from the late 1800s through the early 1940s. An article in the February 10, 1900 *Sheboygan Herald* stated that Dr. James VanDerVen established a practice in Cedar Grove in 1896. Dr. VanDerVen reportedly received his preliminary education in the Netherlands and then immigrated to the United States when

he was twenty years old. He first studied medicine at the University of Michigan and then moved to New York where he graduated from Long Island College Hospital in 1891. Dr. VanDerVen served as a county physician at the Kent County Hospital in Michigan before moving to Cedar Grove in 1896. It is not known exactly how long Dr. VanDerVen operated a medical practice in Cedar Grove.

By the early 1900s Dr. Anthony Voskuil was serving the Cedar Grove area as a practicing physician as well. Dr. Voskuil grew up in Cedar Grove, spent a few years as a teacher, and then began his medical training at Marquette University in Milwaukee. He graduated from Marquette Medical College in 1907. He initially established a practice in Sheboygan Falls but soon came home to Cedar Grove. Dr. Voskuil also had an early automobile, a 1913 model which he reportedly only used during the summer months. An interesting side note is that in later years after he had suffered a stroke Dr. Voskuil continued practicing medicine but had a chauffeur, Kathryn TeKulve. Dr. Voskuil practiced medicine in this area for over thirty-five years, but his service to the community did not stop there. He served on the Cedar Grove Public Schools' Board of Education for many years.

Dr. G.H. Stannard, representing the Sheboygan County Medical Association, made the following remarks at a 1942



Doctors VanAltena, Duenk, and Voskuil at a Picnic Honoring their Combined 127-Years of Service  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

L-R: Dr. L. VanAltena , Dr. A. Duenk, Dr. A. Voskuil

picnic where Doctors VanAltena and Voskuil were honored for their many years of service to the community:

*They did more than look after the physical ills and discomforts of people. Theirs was an intimacy, a confidential relationship which enabled them to know the mental and spiritual troubles of their clientele, as well as their diseases. Frequently it was a most potent influence in treating such distressing conditions. . . . This community has been exceedingly fortunate in that the doctors who have practiced medicine here have been not only well-trained, well-disciplined scholars, but with a sense of responsibility towards their patients, which made them keep up with the advance of medicine--which is no small matter. I say that you have been exceedingly fortunate that you have had as your physicians for these many decades these men who represent a very high type of Christian manhood, men with the highest integrity, with the finest spirit of tolerance, and a great human understanding and unbounded sympathy.*

By the mid-1940s both Dr. VanAltena and Dr. Voskuil had retired, so area residents traveled to Adell, Random Lake, or Sheboygan for medical treatment. Then in August of 1948 Dr. James S. Jensen came to Cedar Grove. He was a native of Sheboygan and a 1945 graduate of the Wisconsin Medical School. He served his internship at Christ Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, and then served two years in the U.S. Army.

Dr. Jensen built his first office adjacent to what is now the fire station on Main Street. He typically traveled to Sheboygan each morning to see patients who were hospitalized, as well as treating patients in his Cedar Grove office four afternoons and three evenings each week. In the early 1950s, Dr. Jensen hired Johanna Tempas Leynse as his first receptionist and medical assistant. She continued to serve in that capacity for over thirty years. By 1962 Dr. Jensen's practice had grown to the point where a registered nurse was needed to assist him. Muriel Meinen was subsequently hired on a part-time basis.

Dr. Jensen made many house calls during the early years of his medical practice here. One day during an epidemic he reportedly made seventeen house calls in addition to his trip to the hospital

and his regular office hours. Dr. Jensen performed minor surgery and some laboratory tests in his Cedar Grove office and over the years treated many injuries that occurred at the foundries and other factories within the village. He also delivered about five hundred babies over the years, including several sets of twins.

During the mid-1960s Dr. Jensen hired another registered nurse to assist in the office as his practice continued to grow. He dispensed all of his prescribed medications, thus sparing patients a trip to the “big city” to have their prescriptions filled. Muriel Meinen, Josephine Ellarson, and Delores Dees served as Dr. Jensen’s nurses during the years he practiced medicine here.

In 1966 Dr. Jensen moved into a new, larger building just across the street from his first office. Dr. Jensen could always be reached by telephone and was “on call” twenty-four hours a day until he retired on November 1, 1986. As with previous doctors that served this area, Dr. Jensen contributed to this community in a variety of ways including service on the Cedar Grove Public Schools’ Board of Education.

When he retired in the mid-1980s, Dr. Jensen sold his office building and practice to the Marsho Clinic of Sheboygan. The Marsho Clinic had a practicing physician at their Cedar Grove office briefly and then sold the office building to the Holland Mutual Insurance Co. in 1988. The Holland Mutual Insurance Co. soon shared the building with Loving Hands Chiropractic Clinic which was opened in June of 1990 by Dr. Rebecca Ashworth. Dr. Ashworth was a graduate of Palmer College of Chiropractics as well as being a registered nurse, a massage therapist, and a physical education instructor. She operated a part-time chiropractic clinic here for four years before moving to the rural Oostburg area in 1994.

Shortly after Dr. Ashworth moved her practice, Cedar Grove welcomed Dr. John Schmitt to the same office location. A Kiel native, Dr. Schmitt received his undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin-LaCrosse. After studying dentistry for a few years, he switched majors and returned to school for a chiropractic degree. Dr. Schmitt graduated from the National College of Chiropractic at Lombard, Illinois. Following an internship at the Salvation Army Clinic in downtown Chicago, Dr. Schmitt established his own practice here in 1995. His special interest is

as a therapist for sports-related injuries.

Many residents watched as three downtown buildings on South Main Street were razed during the mid-1980s to make room for the Cedar Grove Clinic, which is a branch of the Sheboygan Clinic. The branch office is headed by family practitioner Dr. Lee Duncklee, a 1983 graduate of the Medical School of the University of Florida. Dr. Duncklee served his internship and residency in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, before coming to Cedar Grove. Dr. John Reiskytl joined Dr. Duncklee at the Cedar Grove office in 1991 and eventually moved on to establish a practice at the Sheboygan Clinic's Random Lake office.

At the present time the Cedar Grove Clinic includes a laboratory, an x-ray room, a room for performing minor surgery and other procedures, and numerous patient examining rooms. The Cedar Grove Clinic has a courier service that links the satellite office to the Sheboygan Clinic. In addition to Dr. Duncklee, the Cedar Grove Clinic is staffed by two full-time nurses and one nurse/receptionist. Aurora Pharmacy, formerly Roenitz Pharmacy, is housed in the same building.

### **Dentists**

It has been reported that in the early days of dentistry no license was needed to practice. All a would-be dentist needed to do was put up a sign and wait for patients to appear. It is not presently known whether Cedar Grove ever had such a dentist. It is likely, however, that during its early years Cedar Grove was served by a city dentist who made occasional visits to rural areas.

The first dentist that present-day Cedar Grove residents are likely to remember is Dr. Arnie Duenk, a licensed dentist with impressive credentials. Dr. Arnie Duenk, who was the first of three generations of the Duenk family to practice dentistry in Cedar Grove, went to the Marquette Dental School for three years, graduating in 1909. In addition to his Cedar Grove office, Dr. Duenk had office hours in Port Washington and Oostburg for a time, taking the streetcar to work in those two locations. His Oostburg office was located in the bank building. Arnie's wife Leta and later his daughter Jean served as bookkeeper for the practice.

By 1914 Dr. Duenk's Cedar Grove practice was located in a small building on South Main Street where the National



Exchange Bank and Trust now stands. When Cedar Grove State Bank wanted to buy the land on which his office stood, Dr. Duenk agreed to sell the property if they would provide him with office space within the new bank building. An agreement was reached, and in 1922 Dr. Duenk opened a brand new office on the second floor of the Cedar Grove State Bank.

Dr. Arnie Duenk frequently related stories of early dentistry where drills were operated by a foot pedal and there was no novocaine to relieve pain. Dr. Arnie Duenk retired in 1955 after forty-six years of service to this community.

By the 1950s Cedar Grove had a new Dr. Duenk practicing dentistry. Dr. Homer Duenk, the son of Arnie and Leta, graduated from Marquette Dental School in 1950 and returned to Cedar Grove. Uncle Sam called him one year later, and he served in the U.S. armed forces for two years before returning home in 1953. Dr. Homer Duenk then worked with his father for two years before taking over the practice in 1955.

In 1968 Dr. Homer Duenk moved his office from the upstairs of the bank building to a new, larger building at the corner of Elm Street and Cedar Avenue. He continued to practice dentistry there until his retirement in 1986. By the time Dr. Homer Duenk retired, a third generation Dr. Duenk was participating in the practice. Dr. Jeffrey Duenk, who is the son of Homer and grandson of Arnie, also graduated from the Marquette School of Dentistry. He, too, came back to the Cedar Grove area and worked with his father for a year before taking over the practice in 1986. Dr. Jeff Duenk continues in this family tradition using many modern techniques that would be quite foreign to his grandfather Arnie.

### **Veterinarians**

Very little is known about early veterinary services in the Cedar Grove area, but such services were apparently available to area farmers by the late 1800s. An article in the February 10, 1900 *Sheboygan Herald* briefly discusses the services of Veterinary Surgeon C.J. Huenink stating:

*For eleven years Dr. Huenink has administered to the physical ailments of the dumb brutes in this section and has proven him-*

*self familiar with the diseases common to the animal kingdom and his success has won for him a good practice his services being called for in many parts of the county.*

The first veterinarian likely to be remembered by most present-day Cedar Grove residents is Dr. Clarence Meeusen. Dr. Meeusen started his veterinary practice here in 1946 after returning home from overseas duty during World War II. Initially he operated his veterinary clinic in a barn on the south end of Cedar Grove. Then in 1948 he built a garage with a veterinary office attached at what is still his personal residence on South Main Street. Dr. Meeusen has related how during his early years in practice he made use of a rather primitive form of call-forwarding through the local telephone company. Dr. Meeusen would let the local telephone operator know where he would be working, and if there was a telephone call for him during that time, the operator would ring the farm he was working at instead of ringing his office.

Dr. Meeusen operated his Main Street practice alone for over twenty-five years before building what is now Cedar Grove Veterinary Services along County Highway RR. At about the time the new veterinary office was built, Dr. Meeusen hired an associate, Ron Hinze, who later became his son-in-law. Additional staff joined the veterinary practice over the next several years as well.

Dr. Clarence Meeusen sold his practice in the early 1980s and retired at that time. Cedar Grove Veterinary Services presently employs five full-time veterinarians as well as a support staff.

## - Chapter Fourteen - Service Organizations

### Service Clubs

**T**he people of Cedar Grove have a great appreciation for this community and take great pride in it. Local residents continually seek to preserve the special qualities that exist here. That sense of community is clearly demonstrated by the rich history of the service clubs and organizations that have contributed to the village over the years. There is a real concern for the well-being and development of area citizens, especially youth, in this little Dutch town.

Cedar Grove's first Boy Scout Troop was established a very long time ago. A newspaper clipping dated May 25, 1920, stated that:

*Last evening the scout executive attended a second meeting at Cedar Grove and completed the organization of a scout troop there. Cedar Grove has been anxious for some time to get organized. The whole community is back of the scout movement in a wonderful way, all are very enthusiastic....The troop committee selected as scout master William Theune.*

A second publication, *Cedar Grove's Centennial Booklet* from 1947 stated:

*Cedar Grove's Boy Scout Troop No. 41 was organized in 1925 with Arthur Schreurs as Troop Master. The Troop has turned out many First Class Scouts, some of whom have gone on to earn Star, Life and Eagle awards.*

Whichever report is right, the results are the same. Cedar Grove's Boy Scout Troop is alive and well. The troop is now

known as Troop No. 841 under the leadership of scoutmaster Jeff Duenk. The Tiger Cubs, Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, and Eagle Scouts of Cedar Grove have grown and will continue to grow into responsible, mature, and capable men serving their community. Those who have moved to other cities and towns have taken with them the skills and character learned here in the Boy Scout Troop of Cedar Grove.

One of the first 4-H clubs in this area appears to have been the Happy Hearty Holland Hustlers 4-H Club which met as early as the 1930s. Wilfred Huenink, who went on to become a 4-H leader, was a member of this early club. Mrs. Walter Hesselink was general leader of the club during the 1930s. It is not known exactly how long this early club existed, but it is known that some 4-H club activities were suspended briefly during World War II. At some point after the war ended, another 4-H club began meeting in a one-room school within view of Lake Michigan. This appears to be the reason why the local 4-H club's name is presently the Lakeview Badgers. Herman and Mercedes Roerdink served as general leaders of the Lakeview Badgers during the 1950s and 1960s and promoted the club's activities during that time. The local club continued to prosper over the next several decades. As of 1997 the Lakeview Badgers' membership includes thirty-three boys and twenty-eight girls ranging from eight to eighteen years old. The local 4-H club presently has sixteen adult leaders with Mary Huenink serving as general leader.

The Sauk Trail Conservation Club began in the early 1940s and has provided more than one generation of sportsmen and women the opportunity to improve their conservation education, hone their outdoor skills, and contribute to the community in many additional ways. The conservation club offers hunter and boating safety courses, supplies conservation literature and children's publications to the library, and provides hunting-skills training to interested individuals. In cooperation with other clubs and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the Sauk Trail Conservation Club manages and restocks pheasants throughout the area. They are particularly involved with the Jilin breed of pheasant which can become self-sufficient in this area. Two high school students have the privilege of attending the Trees for Tomorrow Camp in Eagle River each year because of

the local conservation club. Sauk Trail Conservation Club was honored as Sheboygan County's Conservation Club of the year in 1995.

The purpose of the Cedar Grove Booster Club, which was organized in the mid-1950s, was to assist and support the development of the community. Shortly after the local Booster Club was formed, the group began to sponsor "Bonus Night" where local businesses contributed toward a prize drawing every Friday night. The location of the prize drawing varied from week to week. If the person whose name was drawn was in the appropriate establishment at the time of the drawing, the lucky citizen received a cash prize. This drawing packed Cedar Grove's businesses every Friday night.

The local Booster Club sponsored the Holland Festival from 1965 until 1971 when several other service organizations took on that responsibility. In a most ambitious and appreciated project,



DeVisch Windmill Along South Main Street in Cedar Grove  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

the Booster Club coordinated the design and construction of DeVisch, the stately windmill in downtown Cedar Grove. This replica of a South-Holland grain mill was completed in the late 1960s and stands as a reminder of our proud Dutch heritage. Though the original Cedar Grove Booster Club eventually disbanded, most of its members went on to participate in other local service organizations. As a result, its purpose and goals live on within the Village of Cedar Grove.

The Girl Scout Promise states that "On my honor I will try to do my duty to God and my country. To help other people at all times and to obey the Girl Scout laws." The ten Girl Scout laws that follow this promise instill a sense of friendship, kindness, joyfulness, and morality in the young ladies that have solemnly spoken these words. The first Cedar Grove troop was formed in 1958 under the leadership of Dorothy Veldhorst Jensema. The local Girl Scouts disbanded for a short time in 1963 and then reorganized in 1968. Presently the community has ten Girl Scout troops. Leading the local Girl Scouts are Service Unit Chair Ronnie Morgan, Troop Organizer Teresa Grossheim, Troop Consultant Kris Riley, and of course the numerous troop leaders. Cedar Grove is surely a better community for having the Girl Scout organization active here.

The Pioneer Girls organized in the fall of 1961 with fifty girls in third grade through eighth grade participating. The motto of the Pioneer Girls was "Christ in every phase of a girl's life" and their chosen Bible verse was, "Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Every Pioneer Girl had a Prayer Partner who took a special interest in her and prayed for her. The young ladies worked very hard to earn badges in Citizenship, Missions, Nature, Cooking, Safety, Bible, and Outdoors. The girls enjoyed highlight events throughout the year including numerous special outings, a Badge Banquet and a Father/Daughter Banquet. The Pioneer Girls disbanded in 1969.

A garden club was formed in Cedar Grove on April 4, 1966, and adopted the name "Whispering Cedars Garden Club" on February 6, 1968. The group's purpose was stated as follows.

*Article I: The object of this garden club shall be to bring into membership anyone interested in gardening, for a sociable get-together*

*purpose and to cooperate with the above club.*

Whispering Cedars Garden Club members enjoyed guest speakers, slide programs, and outings to botanical gardens and parks. They worked in cooperation with the Booster Club to landscape, beautify, and maintain Windmill Park in downtown Cedar Grove. The club planted hundreds of tulips, flats of flowers, and shrubbery in the village's three parks. Cedar Grove High School received a gift of trees in front of the school and the Klompen Dancers were given a gift of money for their 1976 trip to Washington D.C. In October of 1990 Whispering Cedars Garden Club disbanded. As a local publication once indicated this area's "beautiful, well-kept yards and gardens are in part a tribute to the efforts of this group."

The Cedar Grove Kiwanis Club originated in January of 1972 and was incorporated as a Wisconsin Corporation "without stock and not for profit" in August of 1974. Among the Article III Corporation Purpose Points is the statement that the Kiwanis Club is there "to render altruistic service and to build better communities." From the time of its origin in the early 1970s until its dissolution in 1995, the local Kiwanis Club did just that! Using funds obtained from Holland Festival concession stands and other fund raisers, the local Kiwanis club sponsored annual scholarships, youth basketball tournaments, and a summer outdoor activity day for the elderly. They also contributed to the summer library reading program, donated time and money to the blood drive, and contributed to the Children's Broadcast Network.

The local chapter of the Jaycees was organized in June of 1974 with twenty-six charter members. The local Jaycee chapter was a service organization that stressed the importance of helping a community solve its problems, especially through the sponsorship of programs for youth. The local Jaycee chapter sponsored a bicycle safety course, started the local Halloween Watch, and guaranteed that Santa was on hand to meet local boys and girls each Christmas season. The local Jaycees sponsored several Holland Festival projects as well. The hardworking men of the local Jaycee chapter have moved on to other organizations now, but the community continues to reap the benefits of having the Jaycees active in our village at one time.



The Jaycettes followed their gentlemen counterparts by chartering in October of 1974. The Jaycettes' purpose was also to help the community by supporting the Jaycees in their work and organizing projects of their own. Cedar Grove boys and girls can thank the Jaycettes for the infant swings and "springy" playground equipment in Memorial Park. These industrious women also worked to further beautify Memorial Park by maintaining flower gardens there. Jaycees and Jaycettes served our village for some time, and we are grateful for them.

The Amsterdam Lions Club was formed in October of 1978 and accepted its charter with a celebration dinner on January 20, 1979. The motto of the nation-wide Lions Club organization is "Love, Compassion and Spirit in Action." The Cedar Grove chapter has more than lived up to that standard through its contributions to the community. Over the years the local Lions Club has sponsored a Pine Haven seniors fall outing to the Kettle Moraine State Forest; provided the shelter at Amsterdam Park; provided Christmas food baskets for the needy; participated in the I-43 Adopt-a-Highway program; collected toys for needy children; provided scholarships for area youth; helped sponsor Cedar Grove's National Honor Society; supported local fire, rescue and first-responder squads; contributed to the local library, youth football program and Boy Scouts; provided eyeglass donations; and more. Cedar Grove can take pride in the Amsterdam Lions Club.

The Optimist Club is relatively new to Cedar Grove having chartered in September of 1995 with an initial membership of thirty-two. This energetic new club has sponsored a number of events here including an eight-to-thirteen-year-old Tri-Star sports program; a seventh-grade basketball tournament; the annual Halloween Watch; and an essay contest. The club has donated funds to various projects including a high school scholarship, the local Reading Is Fundamental program, the local youth football program, and the library's Summer Reading Program. The Optimists have clearly demonstrated that they take their motto "Friend Of Youth" very seriously.

The citizens of the Village of Cedar Grove are a hard-working, conscientious people who are not afraid to get involved and make a difference. The ideas, man-hours of time, and funds that have

gone into service for this community over the past 150 years should be an inspiration to us all.

### **Cedar Grove Community Corporation**

The period of the Great Depression during the 1930s brought hard financial times to our nation. The hardships brought on by the depression were just as real in and around the Village of Cedar Grove. Businesses such as the Cedar Grove Shoe Manufacturing Company were forced to close their doors as they could no longer bear the financial stresses placed upon them.

By 1936 the local economy was beginning to improve somewhat and the vacant shoe factory building became a matter of concern to many within the village. It seemed a shame that the building stood vacant when it could be used to provide gainful employment for so many area residents. One significant obstacle in returning the building to a useful place of employment was that any new business would have to assume a rather heavy mortgage against the property.

They say that necessity is the mother of invention and perhaps it is, because the need to provide employment for village residents resulted in the creation of a very unique business arrangement. Early in 1936 five Cedar Grove area men were incorporated into a group that they named the Cedar Grove Community Corporation. The first five members of the corporation were Con Poppe, John Dees, Leland Meylink, B.J. Walfoort, and Harold Stokdyk. Their intent was to serve as a negotiating committee to secure industry for the Village of Cedar Grove. While the Community Corporation allowed these five men to make significant financial dealings, there was no financial gain involved for any of them.

In a short time the Huth and James Shoe Manufacturing Company of Milwaukee showed some interest in moving its manufacturing operations to the vacant Cedar Grove shoe factory building, but again the problem of the property mortgage arose. As an inducement to the company to move its manufacturing operations to Cedar Grove, the Community Corporation agreed to assume the responsibility of making the required mortgage payments. The Community Corporation then outlined a unique arrangement involving the shoe factory employees themselves to

make those mortgage payments. Through a special written agreement with the employees, three percent of their wages were deducted from their paychecks. These payroll deductions were then used to cover the mortgage payments and certain other expenses. In return for the three percent deduction from their wages, the employees were given a five percent discount on every purchase they made from Cedar Grove merchants who participated in the plan.

This unique financial arrangement continued until 1944 when the Huth and James Company returned to Milwaukee and the Musebeck Shoe Company moved to Cedar Grove from Danville, Illinois. By this time the mortgage balance was quite low and the Musebeck Shoe Company showed no interest in continuing the wage deduction plan. Instead, payment of the mortgage balance was included with other special financial arrangements made with the company at the time of their arrival. From that point until Musebeck ceased operations at the Cedar Grove plant in the late 1980s, Musebeck leased the building from the Community Corporation.

Over the years, funds obtained from the lease of the building in combination with the interest earned on those lease payments have been used to support and promote a variety of local causes including:

- ...a donation toward a heating system for the new village hall in 1949.

- ...an annual gift of \$500 to the Cedar Grove Public Library.

- ...annual scholarships awarded to high school seniors and Holland Festival queens.

- ...a \$1000 donation toward the building of DeVisch Windmill along Main Street.

- ...purchase and resale of the former Gilt Edge Foundry property.

When the Musebeck Shoe Company closed its Cedar Grove plant in the late 1980s, the Community Corporation razed the former shoe factory building and sold the land to an apartment complex developer. Sale of the former shoe factory property allowed the corporation to make even greater contributions to the community as follows.

—A donation of \$30,000 was made to the Cedar Grove Public Library for a community room to be used for public meetings and library story hours.

—A donation of \$60,000 was made to Het Museum for the purchase and remodeling of the TeRonde House at the corner of Main Street and Union Avenue.

On August 16, 1996 the Community Corporation, which had always been made up of five area men who declared their interest in the commercial, industrial and general welfare of the village, was dissolved. At the time of its dissolution, Con Poppe was the only remaining original member of the corporation. Other corporation members at the time of its closing were Dr. C.W. Meeusen, LeRoy Winkelhorst, Marvin Meerdink, and George Ebbers. At that time the corporation's remaining funds were disbursed with a \$10,000 donation to the Cedar Grove Public Library and a \$3,740.55 donation to Het Museum.

### **American Legion VanDerJagt-DeBruine Post No. 338**

An organizational meeting was held on May 21, 1921, to establish an American Legion Post in Cedar Grove. The group's charter members included Anthony Huibregtse, Henry Idsinga, John Duenk, Dan Theune, William Westerbeke, Ulysses Grotenhuis, Mathew Reis, William Berenschot, Peter DePagter, Harold DeMaster, Peter Dees, Con VanDriest, William Potts, Henry Lemmenes, H. John Lammers, William Theune, John Konings, Harry Wieberdink, William Huibregtse, John Dees, Harvey Mentink, Alvey Mentink and Victor Weinrich. Post officers elected at that meeting were: John Dees, Commander; Ulysses Grotenhuis, Vice-Commander; William Theune, Adjutant; Peter Dees, Historian; William Westerbeke, Master-at-Arms; John Lammers, Chaplain; and Henry Idsinga, Finance Officer. A committee appointed to select a name for the post included Henry Lemmenes, Ulysses Grotenhuis, and Alvey Mentink.

At the group's May 26, 1921, meeting the committee recommended that Morris C. VanDerJagt be recognized in the name of the local Legion post. He was a native of the Town of Holland and entered the army as a private, Company C, 340th Infantry,



Morris VanDerJagt and Ellsworth DeBruine,  
Whose Names are Honored in American Legion Post No. 338  
(Photos Courtesy American Legion Post No.338)

4th Division. His outfit sailed for Europe aboard the transport ship *Louisville* on May 18, 1918, and arrived in France on May 26, 1918. He was on active duty there until his death on August 15, 1918. He was the first local resident to die in action in France and his body was returned to Cedar Grove where he was interred at the Walvoord Cemetery. The local Legion post was named in his honor. Others who joined the local Legion post at this, the group's second meeting, included Harvey Ramaker, Elmer Olson, Edward Voskuil, and Herbert Molter.

The October 27, 1921, meeting was devoted to adopting the Preamble and Constitution of the American Legion. The Preamble states the purposes and aims of the organization as follows:

*FOR GOD AND COUNTRY, WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER FOR THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES: TO UPHOLD AND DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; TO MAINTAIN LAW AND ORDER; TO PRESERVE THE MEMORIES AND INCIDENTS OF OUR ASSOCIATION IN THE GREAT WARS; TO INCULCATE A SENSE OF INDIVIDUAL OBLIGATION TO THE COMMUNITY, STATE AND NATION; TO COMBAT*

*THE AUTOCRACY OF BOTH THE CLASSES AND THE MASSES; TO MAKE RIGHT THE MASTER OF MIGHT; TO PROMOTE PEACE AND GOODWILL ON EARTH; TO SAFEGUARD AND TRANSMIT TO POSTERITY THE PRINCIPLES OF JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY; TO CONSECRATE AND SANCTIFY OUR COMRADESHIP BY OUR DEVOTION TO MUTUAL HELPFULNESS.*

Initially, the local Legion post's dues were set at three dollars per year. The group's membership raised additional funds for projects by sponsoring plays at the Main Street village hall as well as sponsoring a Fourth of July picnic and numerous other events in the village. During the group's early years, regular meetings were held in an upstairs room at the Cedar Grove State Bank while larger events took place at the village hall.

In April of 1922 plans were made in conjunction with the Sons of Union Veterans for the first Memorial Day observance in Cedar Grove. At that time the sum of five dollars was appropriated for the decoration of overseas graves. A community picnic was held and net profit from the concessions totaled nearly twenty-four dollars. At about this same time a Care Committee was set up to look after the needs of the families of Civil War veterans, Spanish-American War veterans, and World War veterans.

On May 30, 1923, the first Memorial Day parade was held with a color guard, rifle salute, and school children marching in the parade with little flags. Cedar wreaths were placed on the graves of veterans in community cemeteries. These wreaths were handmade by the Auxiliary using boughs from nearby woods.

In May of 1924 the Auxiliary took charge of the Poppy Drive to raise funds for disabled veterans at the Milwaukee Soldiers Home. In 1924 the local Legion post provided the color guard, rifle salute, and pallbearers for the funeral of John Lammers who was a Civil War veteran.

On November 2, 1925, the first Legion hall was purchased for \$2,000. The building was located on the west side of First Street between the present Wisconsin Avenue and Ramaker Avenue. Equipment to furnish the hall included thirty-one chairs at a total cost of \$42.50, an oil stove for \$15.00, and a wood-burning heater for \$51.00. Legion post members did janitorial work on a



Dedication of Memorial Park, July 31, 1930  
(Photo Courtesy Annette TeRonde)

volunteer basis.

In 1930 VanAltena Avenue's Memorial Park was dedicated in honor of World War veterans thus beginning the tradition of Memorial Day observances in the park. The Great Depression of the 1930s provided another opportunity for service by the local Legion and Auxiliary. A "Poor Committee" was set up to work with other village organizations in helping families who suffered severe economic problems.

In the 1940s the world was swept by unrest, and many local men were called to duty to serve their country as a defense force. During this time the local Legion and Auxiliary bought defense bonds to help shore up the military. They also began to keep a record of local men who were serving in the armed forces. This record was later used to establish an Honor Roll of those who served during World War II. In 1944 the local Legion Auxiliary supervised the dedication of a large, billboard-sized Honor Roll. If anyone in the community knows where this item is, the local Legion post would appreciate knowing so that the Honor Roll can be restored and preserved.

In February of 1946 the Legion Hall on First Street was sold and regular meetings were held in the village hall. In 1946 the Legion's membership rose to ninety with the influx of returning World War II veterans.





The Local American Legion Post's Military Honor Roll  
as Shown at the Conclusion of World War II

(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

L-R: Orlon Berenschot, Jay Schaap, Garrett TenHaken, Mrs. Henry Kreunen, Warren Neerhof, Herbert Stapelkamp

In January of 1947 local Legion post members discussed the possibility of adding the name of the first local veteran who died in action during World War II to the post name. It was decided that the matter should be researched and brought up for discussion and action at a future meeting. In April of 1947 the membership approved adding the name of Ellsworth DeBruine, the first local man to give his life for his country during World War II, to the Legion post's name. Private-First-Class Ellsworth DeBruine, a combat infantryman, served with Company I, 39th Regiment, 9th Division, in the U.S. Army. He had taken part in four campaigns serving in North Africa, Sicily, and Normandy and was awarded four Battle Stars for participation in major battles. PFC DeBruine was killed in action in Normandy, France on July 16, 1944. His parents received the Purple Heart Medal posthumously from the United States Government. His body was returned to Cedar Grove where he was interred at the Presbyterian Cemetery. In the mid-1990s his dog tags were found on the beach at Normandy and were presented to his family.

In October of 1948 the village's original Academy building, which had been moved to the northwest corner of Main Street and VanAltena Avenue, was purchased for Legion post meetings. During the ensuing years the Legion continued to serve the community, particularly youth, by sponsoring a Boy Scout troop, choosing a high school junior to attend Badger Boys State at Ripon College each year, and joining with other posts to sponsor Youth Government Day at the county courthouse each spring. This special day gives students an opportunity to learn firsthand about the operation of county government. In October of 1963 the Main Street Legion Hall was sold and regular meetings were held in the meeting room at the bank and on the second floor of the old elementary school building on VanAltena Avenue.

At one point the local Legion post purchased a lot on the west side of South Main Street next to Hannah Walvoord's Millinery Shop. The Legion post eventually sold the lot to Dr. James Jensen who wanted to build a larger office there. Subsequently, the local Legion post bought a lot on Wisconsin Avenue near Second Street and built a new meeting hall there. The first meeting was held at the new location in January of 1967.

Through the 1960s and beyond, the Legion continued to pursue its aims and purposes. As a vital force in the community the Legion post supported Holland Festival activities with a color guard, floats, committee people, and concession stands to provide income for local projects. High school scholarships were donated annually and continue to this day. The Legion also sponsored a project to serve the community with medical equipment which had either been purchased by the local Legion post or donated by others. The Legion post provided hospital beds, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, and crutches which were loaned to local people on a need basis at no cost.

Every March the Legion's birthday is celebrated with a dinner for Legion and Auxiliary members. In May, Memorial Day continues to be a community event with a parade including Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and many small children carrying little flags which are identical to those used to decorate the graves of veterans in all of the cemeteries under the local Legion post's jurisdiction. The high school band provides stirring music and the service in Memorial Park includes a speaker, more band music,

and the traditional rifle salute and playing of taps.

Veterans Day, which was formerly called Armistice Day in remembrance of the end of hostilities in World War I, is observed annually with a ceremony in the high school auditorium. This is truly a fitting observance with the advancing of the colors, band music, and vocal numbers by the high school choir. In addition, a speaker is present to give a fitting address to the audience which consists of village residents and high school students who help observe the day.

Each February the local Legion post has a Back-to-God observance at which a local pastor provides a message. In recent years a flag was placed in every room at the new school. In 1991 the local Legion post dedicated a Prisoner-Of-War (POW) flag in honor of those forgotten people who have served our country. Each year the local Legion post, as well as all others in the county, hold a ceremony to properly dispose of U.S. flags that are no longer usable. The post invites people in the community to take advantage of this program. In the early 1990s the local post and all other veterans organizations in the county vigorously supported a drive to build a memorial for all Sheboygan County veterans. It is a beautiful memorial and is visible from Kohler Memorial Drive as travelers enter Sheboygan from the west.

In 1991 the Legion post's sole surviving World War I veteran, Arthur Voskuil, was presented a pin recognizing his seventy years of continuous American Legion membership. In 1995 the post meeting was held at Pine Haven Christian Home in Sheboygan Falls to help Arthur celebrate his 100th birthday. He was also presented with a seventy-five year pin in 1996.

In 1995 the Wisconsin Avenue Legion Hall was sold with very mixed feelings. During the hall's twenty-eight years of service, many families held Thanksgiving, Christmas, and other family gatherings there. Over the years many community organizations held meetings there as well.

In June of 1995 the local Legion post held its first meeting in the Community Room of the new public library building on VanAltena Avenue. It is a superb facility in an excellent location, and the Legion post is very grateful for its use. In 1996 the local Legion post honored sixteen members of Post No. 338 for fifty or more years of continuous membership. The local Legion post

has moved around a bit within the community, but through it all has remained dedicated to its original aims and purposes which begin “FOR GOD AND COUNTRY, WE ASSOCIATE OURSELVES TOGETHER...”

The following is a listing of Cedar Grove area veterans who have served their country through various eras. The names of area veterans from the Civil War through World War II have been obtained primarily from Cedar Grove’s Centennial Booklet, while the names of Post-World War II veterans were provided by area residents in response to the local Legion post’s requests for information as published in the *Lakeshore Weekly*. The names of area veterans who died in service to their country are indicated with an asterisk.

1847

## MILITARY ROLL OF HONOR

1997

### CIVIL WAR ERA

John H. Abbink		Bern H. Obrink
John Brummels	William C. Holle	G. J. Oonk
Cornelius Cole	Cornelius Joost	Hubregt Rissiuwew
Abraham Cornelis	Mortens Ketman	Imand Serier
John De Bruine	John W. Kolste	John Shaver
Matt De Master	Henry Kreunen	H. W. Staplekamp
Cornelius De Schmith	Garret Lammers	G. J. Te Lindert
Every Johann Duenk	John H. Lammers	Jan W. Ter Maat
Garret J. Duenk	G. W. Lensink	John Van Der Jagt
Marinus Flipse	Peter Liefbroer	Leonard Van Der Jagt
John Fontaine	Isaac Marsielje	Peter Van Ouwerkerk
Thomas Forgeson	Benjamin Nonhof	Christian Voskuil
Grades Heinen		Arent J. Vruwink

### WORLD WAR I ERA

John Arentsen	Harold De Master	Ulysses Grotenhuis
William Berenschot	Peter De Pagter	Henry Heinen
William Boland	Cyrus Droppers	Harvey Huenink
Alger Bruggink	John Duenk	Henry L. Huenink
Levi A. Dana	Ray Dulmes	Kathryn E. Huenink
John C. Dees	Earl C. Fontaine	Anthony A. Huibregtse

Peter J. Dees	La Mont Fontaine	William Huibregtse
Oliver Huisheere	William Potts	Cornelius Van Driest
William Hyink	Willis Potts	John Van Driest
Henry Idsinga	Chris Prange	William Van Driest
John Konings	Harvey J. Ramaker	Arthur J. Voskuil
Henry Kruis	Lester Ramaker	Clarence Voskuil
William Kurath	Mathew J. Reis	Edward Voskuil
Henry Lammers	John Roelse	Harmon Voskuil
John Lammers	Henry Roth	Lester Voskuil
Henry Lemmenes	*Peter Schipper	Louis Voskuil
Elmer Lubbers	Chas. Semmelack	Walter Voskuil
Harold Lubbers	William Simmelink	Clarence Vruwink
Irwin Lubbers	Garret Ten Haken	Alvin Walvoord
*William Lubbers	William H. Ten Haken	*Arthur Walford
John Meengs	Elmer Ter Maat	Victor Weinrich
Alvey Mentink	Irwin Te Ronde	August Wentzel
Harvey J. Mentink	Daniel Theune	William Westerbeke
Herbert Molter	John Theune	Harry Wieberdink
Elmer Olson	William Theune	*Walter Wissink
*Eugene Potts	*Morris Van Der Jagt	

## WORLD WAR II ERA

Ralph Amberg	Mark Q. Bruce	Howard De Master
Edward Anderson	Dale Bruggink	Howard De Pagter
Gordon Anderson	*Wendell Bruggink	Arthur De Smith
Ralph F. Anderson	Lawrence Brummels	Edwin De Smith
Orville Arendt	Erwin Claerbout	Elmo De Smith
Vernon Arendt	Francis Claerbout	LeRoy De Smith
Howard Arentsen	Stanley Cole	Rodney De Smith
Irwin Arentsen	Warren Conner	Ernest Dietrich
Reuben Arentsen	Harold Daane	Leslie Draayers
Leonard Bares	Carl Dana	Edith Duenk
Glenn Beernink	Gordon Dana	Homer Duenk
Ivan Beernink	Wilmer Dana	Carl Du Mez
Leland Berenschot	Donald De Blaey	Gilbert Dunn
Orlon Berenschot	Stanley De Blaey	Vincent Dunn
Edward Block	*Ellsworth De Bruine	Marlice Eernisse
Harold Block	Carl Dees	Roger Eernisse
Gordon Bloemers	Delmar De Master	Elmer Engelbert

## Chapter 14

Dr. Harms Bloemers	*Ellsworth De Master	Harold Foster
Wilfred Gesch	Clarence Lammers	Arthur Peterson
Dr. James Goodlad	Ernest Lammers	Loyal Plekenpol
Elwood Graven	Norman Lammers	Gerald Plopper
Winson Graven	Walter Lammers	Herbert Prange
Eugene Grotenhuis	Clarence Ledeboer	Clayton Ramaker
Dr. Willard Grotenhuis	Norman Le Mahieu	Ellsworth Ramaker
Dean Hadden	Eugene Lemmenes	Ernest Ramaker
Ben Harmeling	Roland Lemmenes	Hilda Ramaker
Erwin Harmelink	Donald Lohuis	Ida Ramaker
Earl Heinen	*Dwight Lohuis	Roland Ramaker
Clayton Hesselink	Glenn Lohuis	*Lawrence Rassel
Leland Hilbelink	Willard Lohuis	Raymond Rassel
Wallace Hoftiezer	Howard Lubach	Marvin Roelse
Harry Hoitink	Leon Mazur	Melvin Roelse
Harold Holle	Marvin Meerdink	Audley Roerdink
Arvin Huenink	Dr. Clarence Meeusen	Howard Roerdink
Carroll Huenink	Owen Meinen	Owen Ruslink
Delbert Huenink	Ellsworth Mentink	Jay Schaap
Harold Huenink	Lloyd Mentink	Wilmer Schipper
Kenneth Huenink	Robert Mentink	Henry Schneider
LeRoy Huenink	Kenneth Meyer	Harvey Schreurs
Myrle Huenink	Russell Meyer	Harold Schulz
Orville Huenink	Ivan Molter	Albert Sigward
Roger Huibregtse	Stanley Molter	*Gordon Simmelink
Roland Huibregtse	*Anthony Monday	Harvey Simmelink
Lloyd Jansen	Stanley Morris	Daniel Smies
James J. Jensen	LeRoy Mueller	Donald Smies
George Jentink	Robert Musebeck	Marvin Soerens
Marvin Kaland	Roland Navis	Robert Soerens
Marvin Kempink	Donald Neerhof	Herbert Stapelkamp
Carl Kettleson	Henry Neerhof	Glenn Stokdyk
Robert Klein	Jerome Neerhof	Norlief Storheim
Glenn Kleinhesselink	Warren Neerhof	Burton Tempas
Dr. Fred Kolb	Willis Neerhof	Donald Ten Haken
Rev. John Koning	Arthur Nienhuis	Irwin Ten Haken
*Jerome Kreunen	Virgil Nonhof	Ivan Ten Haken
Herman Kruis	Lloyd C. Nysse	Wesley Ten Haken
Jacob Kruis	Earl Obrink	Warren Ten Pas

Lester Kruis	Rodney Olson	Harvey Ter Maat
Dale Te Stroete	Phillip Vande Wall	Cleon Walfoort
Doris Theune	Harvey Van Ess	Clarence Wassink
Rodney Theune	Earl Veldboom	Harry Weavers
Roland Theune	Gordon Veldboom	William Weavers
Stuart Theune	Carl Voskuil	Gertrude Wentzel
Willis Theune	Ellis Voskuil	Gilbert Wentzel
Frank Valukas	Glenn Voskuil	Carl Westerbeke
Joseph Valukas	Homer Voskuil	Gordon Wieberdink
Lloyd Van Der Jagt	Mark W. Voskuil	Rev. George Willis
Henry Vanderwalker	Paul Voskuil	Douglas Wissink
Elmer Van Der Wal	Robert Voskuil	

### KOREAN WAR ERA

Clarence R. Dana	Robert Meinen	Howard L. Rushton
Dale P. De Master	Paul Mentink	Junior Schreurs
Wayne G. Ebbers	Wesley Meylink	Lloyd Schreurs
Richard L. Harmelink	Wesley Obbink	Lester Schultz
Ellsworth H. Hilbelink	Ronald Osborne	William Soerens
Gordon Hilbelink	Cornelius Otte, Jr.	Carl Ten Pas
Carl Huibregtse	Richard H. Otte	Wayne Van Driest
Herbert Inselman	Ernest Prinsen	Philip L. Van Ess
Lamont Kaland	Glenn Prinsen	Wesley E. Veldhorst
Lowell Kappers	Warren Prinsen	Ralph H. Voskuil
Garrit Ledeboer	Roger Raih	Leslie Wieberdink
Audley G. Lemmenes	Dudley Ramaker	Wayne Wieberdink
Norbert Lohuis	Allen Risseeuw	Carl Winkelhorst
Lamont W. Lukens	Lamont Risseeuw	LeRoy Winkelhorst
	Kenneth Rusch	Jerald R. Wisth

### VIETNAM WAR ERA

Gary Beernink	Wayne De Blaey	Dale Huenink
Wayne Beernink	Paul De Master	Philip L. Huenink
Thomas Brasser	Norman De Ruyter	Duane Jensema
James M. Bruce II	Robert De Smidt	Douglas Kleinhans
Robert Caljouw	James Dykstra	Willard K. Kotts
James Claussen	Gary Hilbelink	David Kruis
Robert Claussen	Gerald Hilbelink	Larry D. Lukens
James W. Crist, Fr.	Willard Hoitink	Joel Martin



## Chapter 14

Jose Davila	Carl Huenink	Dean Meeusen
Dale Mentink	Myles Schreurs	Michael J. Theune
David Mentink	Hal Seider	Henry Thill
Richard Mentink	Larry G. Sohre	Darrel Veldboom
LeRoy Meyer	Harlen Te Beest	Dean Voskuil
Roger Meyer	Richard Te Lindert	Kenneth Walvoord
John G. Navis	Gary W. Ten Haken	David Wieberdink
Gilbert J. Nock, Jr.	Leslie Ten Haken	Larry L. Wieberdink
Holle Ramaker	Larry Ten Pas	Mark Wieberdink
Don Schreurs	Daniel K. Theune	

### POST VIETNAM WAR ERAS

Matthew DeBlaey	Susan Hilbelink	Shanon Jon Lukens
Michael J. Heinen	Sarah Huibregtse	Richard J. Otte
Douglas Heuver		William J. Schoeder

### American Legion Auxiliary VanDerJagt-DeBruine Unit No. 338

[By Caroline Kruis, Delores Nonhof,  
Margaret Meerdink, and Marguerite Neerhof]

On October 27, 1921, Legion Commander John Dees presided over a meeting that was called to organize an Auxiliary unit for the local Legion post. The twenty-seven ladies who signed the Charter Roll included Mrs. Henry Idsinga, Mrs. Harry Wieberdink, Mrs. Peter Dees, Mrs. Anthony Huibregtse, Mrs. William Huibregtse, Mrs. Peter Theune, Mrs. Clarence Voskuil, Mrs. Lester Ramaker, Mabel Ten Haken, Mrs. William Theune, Mrs. Lena Stokdyk, Mrs. Henry Lemmenes, Mrs. Garret Grotenhuis, Mrs. Antoinette Lewis, Mrs. Abram Ramaker, Mrs. Ulysses Grotenhuis, Mrs. Peter DePagter, Mrs. G. Wissink, Mrs. H. DuMez, Mrs. A. Fontaine, Mrs. H.J. Mentink, Mrs. Elmer Olson, Evelyn Ramaker, Elizabeth Fontaine, Esther Huibregtse, Mrs. Sadie Stokdyk, and Mrs. A. Huibregtse.

The Preamble to the Legion Auxiliary's Constitution is the same as the Legion Preamble and concludes with the pledge:

*...to participate in and contribute to the accomplishment of the aims and purposes of the American Legion; to consecrate and*

*sanctify our association by our devotion to mutual helpfulness.*

Over the years the Legion Auxiliary has been involved in a variety of projects to help the needy including the provision of food baskets, monetary gifts, coal for heating, credit at gas stations and grocery stores, assistance in paying for a child's surgery, and clothing for children after their parents passed away. Other projects that the local Legion Auxiliary participated in included sponsorship of home nursing courses for women in the community, sewing bandages for the Red Cross, sponsoring Red Cross first-aid classes, donating bleachers to the village hall, purchasing a band uniform, conducting paper and clothing drives, providing a backdrop for the village hall, participating in awards night at the high school, and donating funds to the village library, to the Klompen Dansers' 1976 trip to Washington D.C. and for a scoreboard at school.

Each year since 1950 the local Auxiliary has sponsored a high school junior to attend Badger Girls State at Madison. A poppy poster contest is held in May for elementary school children. In earlier years the local Auxiliary also had an "Americanism" essay contest.

Since 1975 Legion Auxiliary members have been in charge of the blood drive canteen twice yearly. Every Christmas the Auxiliary gives a donation to the Sheboygan County Comprehensive Health Center so gifts can be purchased for residents. The Auxiliary also participate in bingo games for residents at Rocky Knoll.

Over the years the local Legion Auxiliary unit has also responded to many charitable organization appeals such as the Cancer Society, Heart Association, Easter Seals, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, March of Dimes, Children's Service Society, Sheboygan County Literacy Council, Crusade for Freedom, U.S.O., Kettle Moraine Boys School, Holland Relief Fund, Honduras Project, clothing for children in Europe and Asia, flood and tornado relief, garments for Russian War Relief, homemade quilts and clothes for the Netherlands, clothing to Pacific Garden Mission in Chicago, and knitted sweaters for Korean children.

But with all the assistance the local Legion Auxiliary has provided to a wide variety of causes, its primary focus is still on vet-

erans, especially those in the several veterans hospitals in southern Wisconsin. The local unit of the Auxiliary has sewed many, many pounds of carpet rags for the veterans to weave into rugs. Many ladies from the community helped with this cause by donating sewed rags for the project. The Auxiliary has also made tray favors for the hospitals to put on patients' meal trays. During the Christmas season, the Auxiliary purchases many items for the Christmas Gift Shop at the Veterans Hospital in Milwaukee so that patients can send gifts to their families. The local unit also sends monetary gifts to veterans hospitals in Tomah, King, and Madison for Christmas treats. Each year before Memorial Day the Legion Auxiliary sells poppies that have been made by hospitalized veterans. The Auxiliary also places a poppy arrangement in each of the four churches in the village. For many years the local Auxiliary decorated a poppy window at a local business place and later at the library where the group also displayed poppy posters.

During World War II the local Legion Auxiliary purchased Victory Bonds and sent magazine subscriptions to those in the service. The Legion Auxiliary was responsible for coordinating the program when the area's Military Honor Roll was dedicated on Memorial Day 1944. The group also remembered the Gold Star Mothers, those who lost sons in the service, with a plant on Mother's Day. The Auxiliary also maintains the Gold Star flower bed in Memorial Park in honor of the following Gold Star Mothers: Mrs. Garret Wissink (Walter), Mrs. Willis DeBruine (Ellsworth), Mrs. Alger Bruggink (Wendell), Mrs. William Simmelink (Gordon), Mrs. William Lohuis (Dwight), Mrs. Henry Kreunen (Jerome), Mrs. John DeMaster (Ellsworth), Mrs. Anthony Lubbers (William), Mrs. John Rassel (Lawrence), Mrs. Leonard VanDerJagt (Morris), Mrs. Monday (Anthony), Mrs. Susan Schipper (Peter), Mrs. Horace Potts (Eugene and Everett), and Mrs. Joseph Walfort (Arthur).

In 1971 the local Legion Auxiliary began the Community Birthday Calendar project which the group continued to coordinate for twenty years. Other fund raising projects over the years included talent shows, amateur programs, a home show at the village hall, Cudworth Men's Chorus from Milwaukee, card parties with as many as thirty-seven tables, plays with people from the

community taking part, and a griddle cake supper.

The local Auxiliary unit has also served innumerable suppers and lunches for family groups, the local Booster Club, the Farmer's Institute, firemen's meetings, at band concerts in the park, and after basketball games. Beginning in 1968 the Auxiliary assisted the Legion members with a mid-winter fry, but that event met its demise when the Wisconsin Avenue Legion Hall was sold. The Auxiliary also served several different menus at Park Days and Holland Festivals and also assisted the Legion in sponsoring the annual Labor Day celebration for several years after the firemen discontinued doing so.

As the local Legion post moved from one building to another, Auxiliary members were kept busy furnishing the rooms. The group purchased draperies, kitchen equipment, chairs, tables, roasters, dishes, and more. The Auxiliary also regularly provided the local Legion post with monetary gifts to help pay insurance premiums, electric bills, and mortgage payments. It was a happy day on November 26, 1977, when the Legion and Auxiliary gathered at Riverdale Supper Club for a mortgage-burning ceremony.

Now as we meet in the Community Room at the public library, we look back over the years and are thankful that we are still able to continue our association with the dedicated ladies who have been so faithful to our organization.

## - Chapter Fifteen -

### Preserving Our Heritage

#### Holland Festival

**I**t's a hot, sunny, Saturday afternoon in late July. Area residents and guests line the streets of Cedar Grove. Yokes span the broad shoulders of men in Dutch costume as they dip buckets into water barrels spaced evenly along the street. Women and children in Dutch costumes scrub the village's Main Street. At last the Burgemeester and Town Crier declare the streets clean and announce, "The Holland Festival has now begun!" This scene sets the stage for Cedar Grove's Holland Festival each year.

A quote from an early 1900s publication stated that "...in July, 1897, a group of Hollanders gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of their stay in Sheboygan County. There were 48 people present." We don't know exactly where this gathering took place, but we do understand why. Step back in time and imagine some of the conversations at this reunion of friends with a common heritage. Perhaps they spoke of the hardships of the perilous ocean voyage. Some perhaps sadly recalled the loss of friends or relatives during the *Phoenix* disaster. Surely they remembered the crude little cabin they hurried to build before the harsh Wisconsin winter set in. They were certain to discuss how fortunate they were to settle in this area blessed with plentiful wildlife, forests and fertile soil. They surely compared any news they had from the homeland and probably discussed the Amsterdam settlement which had dwindled since the railroad passed through Cedar Grove. Above all, the early settlers certainly thanked God for His care, love, and guidance during the past fifty years. As children politely listened, they were sure to be impressed by the settlers' courage and values and by the deep love these people had for their homeland, the Netherlands.



George Ebbers Hardware Store Float in the 1947 Centennial Parade  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

On August 14 -17, 1947, Cedar Grove celebrated its 100th birthday. This energetic little village threw a huge birthday party! Those four days were filled with band concerts, ceremonies and, of course, street scrubbing and a parade. An elaborate, outdoor Centennial Pageant was the grand finale on each of the first three days of the event: Opening Day, Holland Day, and Homecoming Day. The fitting conclusion to the entire celebration was a community service on Sunday, Worship Day.

Publicity from that time lists the Centennial Pageant as having 600 local people involved in its production. If one considers the number of people involved in the parade, pageant, concerts, meals, and other events and compares those figures to Cedar Grove's population of about 1,000 at the time, one can understand the tremendous effort put forth for the celebration.

The 1947 centennial celebration marked the first of what went on to become the Holland Festival. Over the next five years, two-day festivals were presented with street scrubbing, klompen dancing, parades, musical programs, and operettas including "The Wedding Shoes" and "Tulip Time." Another historical pageant, "Song of America," was presented in 1952.

There was a brief lull for a few years presumably because of the immense amount of work and manpower involved in presenting

such a festival. In 1965 the Cedar Grove Booster Club rekindled the fire and took on sponsorship of the Holland Festival, reviving the event with street scrubbing, klompen dancing, a parade, a queen pageant, musical programs, and tours of local industries. Memorial Park was once again alive with the sights and sounds of the Holland Festival, and we haven't missed a year since.

During the 1967 festival "A Century And Twenty," another impressive outdoor pageant was presented. That year also saw the first art show, now a very popular annual event called the "Art Fair on the Green". A pageant entitled "Our Rich Heritage" was presented in 1968. By this time the festival was a well-known, not-to-be-missed event drawing visitors from near and far on the last Friday and Saturday in July. By 1971 the Cedar Grove Booster Club discontinued its participation in the Holland Festival and the annual event was being sponsored by the American Legion and other local service organizations.

In February of 1975 the Holland Guild Gezelschap was formally organized. The purpose of the Guild is to promote, foster, and preserve the heritage of Dutch ancestry within the Village of Cedar Grove in the Town of Holland, Sheboygan County,



Holland Festival During the Late 1970s  
(Photo Courtesy Cliff and Shirley Sager)



Wisconsin. Since its formation, the Holland Guild Gezelschap has sponsored the annual Holland Festival.

In 1975 the first scenic bus tours were run in conjunction with the festival. The Holland Festival Run was added in 1980 and has proven to be an extremely popular event. This event includes both a 6.2-mile and two-mile run, as well as a noncompetitive two-mile walk. A total of 196 runners participated in this event in 1980. During the 1996 festival there were 585 participants. Ribbons, medals, and trophies are awarded in a variety of divisions, and each participant receives a Holland Fest Run T-shirt.

A Holland Guild Gezelschap scholarship was first awarded in 1981, and that program continues to the present. Encouraging the continuing education of area youth is of prime importance to event organizers.

The Holland Festival is held the last Friday and Saturday in July with continuous entertainment throughout both days, typically including:

Official Opening	Parade
Street Scrubbing	Visits to Het Museum
Klompen Dancing	Scenic Bus Tours
Souvenir Stand	World's Largest Worstebroodje
The Klompenhouwer	Ethnic & Traditional Foods
Fashions of Holland	Wooden Shoe Races
Prize Stand	Musical Entertainment
Reflections of Holland	Flea Market
Art Fair on the Green	Musical Comedy Presentation
Children's Rides	Local Crafts
Holland Festival Run	Sunday Worship Service

All proceeds from the annual Holland Festival are returned to the community through a variety of means. The celebration has remained a family festival to be enjoyed by all.

We are proud of our courageous forefathers who settled here in Cedar Grove in search of a better life. We are proud of the prosperous, God-fearing little community they founded and entrusted to us. And we are especially proud of their deep devotion to their homeland, the Netherlands. This is made exceedingly clear

during one special weekend each year.

### **Klompen Dansers**

When Cedar Grove celebrated its centennial in 1947, Dutch dancers were needed for the historical pageant that was presented in an open-air theater near Memorial Park. Twenty-four young married ladies and high school girls were enlisted to perform in the pageant. The dancers performed as couples with some wearing girls' costumes and others dressed as boys. All, of course, learned to perform in "klompen," or wooden shoes.

Harriet Voskuil was the first director of the Klompen Dansers and found the music and directions for the first dance. Mrs. Con Poppe accompanied them on the piano. As a result of their appearance in the pageant, invitations came from other Wisconsin communities for the dancers to perform at various celebrations, so trips were made to Horicon, Chilton, and Beaver Dam.

When Wisconsin celebrated its centennial in 1948, the Klompen Dansers were invited to perform at the Field House in Madison along with other ethnic dance groups. An additional opportunity was afforded the Klompen Dansers when strolling accordionists were used to provide music along freshly-scrubbed streets during the Holland Festival.

In 1951 a group of younger girls called the "Kleine Volks" was organized to perform their own special dance under the direction of Jeanne Olson and Carolyn Meerdink. They performed for a couple of years and then disbanded.

When the Holland Festival was revived in 1965, a larger group of dancers, mostly of high school age, performed along the street. Soon new dances were developed with help from dance instructor Diane Remy of Sheboygan. A group of more experienced dancers became the "Stage Dansers," which worked on more intricate steps than those used by the street dancers.

During the mid-1960s Mrs. Con Poppe was selected to represent the Dutch nationality at a conference in Madison to plan "The Pageant of Our People." The Klompen Dansers subsequently joined other dance groups in performing at the "All Wisconsin Folk Festival" at Camp Randall Stadium on July 12, 1966. They also appeared at festivals at the Brown County Fairgrounds in Green Bay and at the Wilhelm Tell Festival in New Glarus.

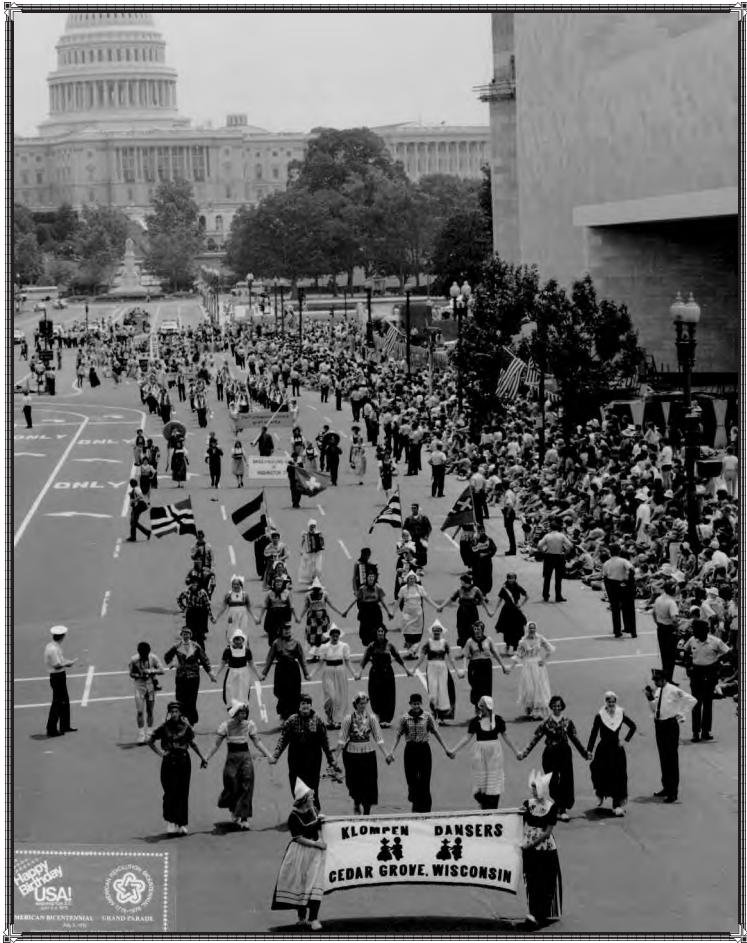
In the early 1970s, a group of girls in grades four through six was organized into the “Kleine Dansers” or little dancers to prepare them for the steps that the older girls used. The “Kinder Klossers,” girls and boys from five to eight years old, began dancing in 1975. The antics of these young children and their attempts to dance with wooden shoes always delight those who watch. Betsy Theune and Jean Schreurs have led this group faithfully for many years.

Throughout the years, various dance groups have represented “The Little Dutch Town in the Heart of America’s Dairyland” at programs and activities for the elderly. Many nursing home residents have been entertained by the dancers, and sometimes Dutch hats made from paper were provided for the residents.

Because of the widespread appearances of the Stage Dansers, another step was taken in 1973 when special costumes were made for the sixteen girls who danced at festivals throughout the state. The street and stage dancers appeared for several years at Sheboygan’s Memorial Mall, at the John Michael Kohler Arts Center in Sheboygan, on the Summerfest Stage in Milwaukee, and at the Wisconsin State Fair. They also danced at a celebration in Green Bay when the Freedom Train rolled through in 1975.

As the number of dancers continued to grow, the group not only had roving accordionists but also a decorated trailer with a microphone and amplifier to carry the music to all of the dancers. At one time over 200 dancers lined the streets during the Holland Festival to entertain visitors from throughout the state and nation.

Then in 1976 when our nation celebrated its bicentennial, the Klompen Dansers were selected as the official ethnic group representing the state of Wisconsin in the American Bicentennial Grand Parade in Washington D.C. This came about through the efforts of Diana Nett corresponding with Jim Dykstra at Representative William Steiger’s office in Washington, D.C. A new marching step was worked up especially for the parade which was nationally televised as the main event during Independence Weekend activities. Otte Bus Service took twenty-six klompen dancers, five accordionists, flag bearers, and numerous chaperones to our nation’s capital where the group joined bands, choruses, and other dance groups from throughout the United States performing music and dance from various periods



Cedar Grove Klompen Dancers in the 1976 Bicentennial Parade  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

throughout American history. Support from the people of Cedar Grove enabled the group to raise the \$4,000 needed for the trip. While in the Washington D.C. area, the dancers also participated in Alexandria, Virginia's bicentennial parade where they were awarded a trophy for second place in the special units division.

This group also marched for many years in the Fourth of July parade in Sheboygan and in the Fish Day parade in Port Washington. Various leaders have worked with the dancers over the years and many local accordionists have contributed their

time and talents along with hours of practice so that the dancers could perform in the Holland Festival as well as at many other places. In recent years the Klompen Dansers have appeared in festivals at Mud Island near Memphis, Tennessee with a side tour of the Graceland Mansion; at the Hormel Festival in Austin, Minnesota; at the Yester Festival in Tomahawk, Wisconsin where the dancers received a first place trophy; and at an international event for the Girl Scouts at the American Club in Kohler, Wisconsin. They have also helped teach dance steps to some girls in Waupun, Wisconsin when that city began its own Dutch Festival.

In 1977 some former street and stage dancers began a new group called the “Dutch Maidens,” and they participated in the Holland Festival for several years. We can be proud of all of our Klompen Dansers and encourage them to continue in their efforts as they still are an important part of the Holland Festival. They are much appreciated as they add their colorful “klomp-klomp” to our celebration.

### **Holland Guild Gezelschap**

Gezelschap, a Dutch word meaning a group of people with a common interest, aptly describes Cedar Grove’s Holland Guild. On July 11, 1974, a meeting was held to present ideas and voice opinions about forming a guild that would oversee and conduct the annual Holland Festival. Methods of getting help and how the guild would handle finances were discussed. It was decided that in order to have a guild there would have to be a governing board. It was also determined that to continue the Holland Festival the guild would have to involve people from many local service organizations who would be willing to have booths and stands for the purpose of making money for their organization while providing a percentage of their proceeds to the guild.

A second meeting concerning the formation of a guild was held on November 13, 1974, in the basement of the village library. It was determined by that time that both the American Legion and the Kiwanis Club had decided to give up their part in planning the Holland Festival. Before those two organizations took over, the local Booster Club had planned the Holland Festival for many years.

Within a relatively short time, articles of incorporation were

submitted for consideration, and on February 28, 1975, the Holland Guild Gezelschap, Inc. was officially formed. Its purpose as stated on the membership card is:

*...to promote, foster and preserve the heritage of Dutch ancestry and Dutch culture by holding festivals, and by other means, within the Village of Cedar Grove in the Town of Holland, Sheboygan County, Wisconsin, and to cooperate with and assist other organizations with similar purposes wherever they are located.*

Milwaukee artist Hans Krommenhoek, who was born in the Netherlands, presented ideas for guild activities and helped design a suitable emblem to be part of a flag, lapel pin, and membership card. The first guild officers elected were Robert Huibregtse, president; Ralph DeSmidt, vice-president; Margaret Voskuil, secretary; and Marion Hilbelink, treasurer. Shirley Sager was in charge of public relations for the group and LeRoy Winkelhorst and Audley Roerdink also served on the initial board of directors. Charter membership was available for a fee of one-dollar from February 28, 1975, until midnight on the Saturday of the 1975 Holland Festival.

### **Het Museum**

The local museum was born out of the Holland Guild Gezelschap when plans were being made to help celebrate the nation's bicentennial. In a letter read by Mrs. Shirley Sager at the December 2, 1974, Holland Guild Gezelschap meeting it was stated that funds would be available for some bicentennial projects. At a special Holland Guild meeting on January 4, 1975, which was open to all interested persons, Mrs. Sager explained the bicentennial funding program in more detail. If local funds were present, matching funds would be available from the federal government. If local funds were lacking, an evaluation would be made to determine whether federal funds would be appropriated for the project. A motion was made by Robert Soerens and supported by Mrs. Ethel DuMez to let the Holland Guild Board decide which way to proceed with bicentennial participation.

At the next Holland Guild meeting, on February 10, 1975, a lengthy discussion occurred. The hope was that interest in a local

museum could be generated among various organizations and that contributions would be forthcoming to purchase property, do the renovations necessary, and begin collecting artifacts. The village board was approached and they initially agreed to contribute \$2,000 toward the museum project. The minutes from this meeting also suggested that Wayne Ruesink of Ruesink Plumbing and Heating be approached about the availability and price of his building on Main Street.

At about this time, a special bicentennial committee was appointed including chairperson Shirley Sager; Kiwanis representative Ken Glewen; village board representative Leslie Wieberdink; Jaycee representative Dave Heuver; American Legion representative Virgil Nonhof; Jaycette representative Donna Smies; Legion Auxiliary representative Grace Dees; Sauk Trail Conservation Club representative George VanSluys; 4-H representative Richard Otte; garden club representative Jeanette Otte; Calvary Church representative Carolyn Neerhof; Faith Reformed Church representative Rev. Leon Dykstra; First Presbyterian Church representative Nola Bruggink; and First Reformed Church representative Rev. Cornelius Hoekstra.

At the Holland Guild's February 17, 1975, meeting president Robert Huibregtse reported that the Ruesink building on Main Street was available at a cost of \$5,000. At the Holland Guild's April 21, 1975, meeting discussion centered on the proposed museum property with meeting minutes stating:

*The property is to be owned and maintained by the village. It will be run by a board of elected members similar to the way the village library is run. The building has been seen by the state inspector and that only minor changes are necessary to meet state approval for use as a public building. Purchase price: \$5000. The village will assume this entire amount at the present time with \$2500 of this amount to be returned either from bicentennial funding or from donations from organizations, businesses or individuals. Atty. Anderson was instructed to complete this transaction as soon as possible even though the building is not yet vacated.*

At the May 15, 1975, Holland Guild meeting Shirley Sager



announced that a \$500 down payment was made by the village for the museum building. There was still no report on government funding. She urged that the general public be made aware of the need for old pictures, artifacts, and information that could be used in the museum.

On September 8, 1975, Audley Roerdink, Marion Hilbelink, Shirley Sager, and Margaret Voskuil went before the village board to discuss financial and operational aspects of the museum. It was decided that the village board and the Holland Guild Board would together select a museum board. Until a museum board was selected and working, the bicentennial committee would continue to raise funds to renovate the building for museum purposes. It was also suggested that the Holland Guild president attend the bicentennial committee meetings and report back to the guild.

By November 6, 1975, the selections for the first museum board had been made. The initial museum board included Leslie Wieberdink, Village Board member; Al Holle, Holland Guild member; Vera Mentink, three-year term; LeRoy Winkelhorst, three-year term; Bob Sass, two-year term; Marilyn Westerbeke, two-year term; and Donna Smies, one-year term. At that meeting, Bob Sass became the first president of the Museum Board.

Suddenly, thousands of details had to be attended to. Money-raising was a priority to which the community responded very well. As funds began to come in, donations of artifacts and other memorabilia began to arrive as well. A printed form for handling museum donations and loans was approved and put into use. To keep the community informed, all donations from different sources were published in *The Villager*.

On December 19, 1975, the Museum Board learned that their request for a grant had been denied. Thus, the very reason all of the museum plans were started became a moot point. However, this news proved to be no deterrent because by this time the plans had developed a life of their own and were progressing very well.

On January 6, 1976, Bob Sass presented plans to draftsman Bernard Wynveen for the outside of the building. The same picture was published in the *Villager* asking area residents to help select a name for the museum. In February the plans for renovation of the museum building were given to all of the carpenters in the village and the lowest bid was to be accepted. LeRoy

Huenink was chosen for the job and renovation work began in April of 1976.

It is interesting to note that equipment from Lewis Smies' blacksmith shop was moved into the museum building before renovation ever began thus indicating that the project was moving forward on many fronts. That first museum board apparently had faith aplenty because at the June 7, 1976, board meeting it was decided to have the museum open for Holland Festival that year. Volunteers from the "Golden Agers" were requested to help with registration of museum guests, and their response was heartening.

Great progress was made over the next several months. A sign by Hans Krommenhoek, brick for the front, new front doors, painting, paneling, a new roof, electrical upgrades, additional lighting, window repairs, and shutters were just a few of the changes that had to be made. The move was also on to provide display cases, filing cabinets, and other office equipment in a timely manner. Display areas had to be provided for the wide variety of donated artifacts that were beginning to appear. Flags



Het Museum During the Late 1970s  
(Photo Courtesy Het Museum)

were displayed outside the building and plantings were done by the local garden club, all to welcome the museum's first visitors during the 1976 Holland Festival.

Throughout 1977 and 1978 additional improvements were made to the museum. Renovating the building, gathering memorabilia, and arranging gathered items kept museum board members and other volunteers occupied. The early 1980s saw decisions made on light fixtures, cabinets, flooring, and fans. Minutes from the museum board's April 4, 1983 meeting show that thirteen Dutch province flags had been purchased. In June of that same year Karen Ringlein announced that dolls in costumes sewn by many women of the community were ready for display. The museum hosted its first Christmas Open House on November 28, 1990. Carl DuMez donated a tree which was then trimmed by museum board representatives Gladys Wisse, Lenore Meinen, and Margaret Voskuil. Approximately seventy-five visitors attended the open house.

By 1986 the problem of limited museum space had already begun to arise. Minutes of the October 20, 1986, museum board meeting stated that "...the house north of the museum is no longer available." The museum board apparently then talked briefly about expanding into the second floor of the present museum. The problem arose again in September of 1989 when the possibility of buying additional footage to the east of the present museum building was discussed. The Holland Guild was also approached about using a portion of their building along VanAltena Avenue, and when a new elementary school was built in the early 1990s there was talk of perhaps using a part of the previous elementary school building as a museum.

The problem of overcrowding did not go away. From 1986 through the early 1990s the topic came up time and again. Minutes from a 1993 board meeting stated that "the Village Board would be willing to purchase another building for museum expansion providing that the house had been well kept so it would not need a lot of additional expense." Efforts were again made to purchase more property to the east of the present museum, but little progress was made.

On July 13, 1995, a special meeting was called to consider the offer of Annette TeRonde to sell her house on the corner of Main

Street and Union Avenue to the museum. The Museum Board was told that the Community Corporation might help with funding. At that meeting Winson Graven made a motion which Lenore Meinen supported that the museum board move ahead toward purchase of the subject property. The motion was unanimously approved.

At its August 8, 1995, meeting the museum board was told that the Community Corporation would purchase the house plus provide additional funds for any furnishings that might be needed. A closing date of September 15, 1995, was set and the local museum entered a new era.

“TeRonde House” became the immediate focus of the museum board. Guidelines regarding care and use of the facility were drawn up by the museum board and village board. The building’s immediate needs were addressed and attention then turned to long-range plans for the facility. The year 1996 was a very busy one but one during which great strides were made. Work progressed in all areas to the point where the museum board felt secure in scheduling an open house for January 4, 1997.

Hurried changes of furnishings plus some new acquisitions and refurbishing gave TeRonde House a beautiful look for its unveiling. Approximately eighty visitors attended the open house to see the efforts of countless volunteers who stepped forward when needed. Heartfelt thanks go out to the community for their support in the past, present, and future endeavors of the local museum. The Mission Statement of the museum board is as fitting for the future as it was when it was first written:

*Our mission is the discovery, collection and preservation of information, records, and objects relating to the history of the Village of Cedar Grove and surrounding townships and to make said materials available for viewing and study by interested people.*

### **Het Museum Building**

The building that houses Het Museum on Main Street was originally built as a cheese factory during the 1870s. It may have been there as early as 1875 when the Mather Brothers, pioneer cheesemakers from Sheboygan Falls, were reported to be proprietors of a Cedar Grove Cheese Factory. No confirmation of that

report has been found, though, and land records have been somewhat inconclusive.

William Stronks was shipping cheese in 1879 and is listed as an early owner of the property to the north of Het Museum. By 1882 Stronks and John VandeWall were in partnership, and a news item mentioned that John VandeWall added a 16-foot x 16-foot curing room to the factory. The rear room of the museum, which is definitely an add-on, exactly matches those dimensions. By 1883 the factory was reportedly receiving 3,800 pounds of milk per day.

Anthony VandeWall, who already owned the lot to the south, bought the business in 1886. John Huenink and John VandeWall bought the business as well as lots to the north and south of the building in 1889. VandeWall sold his share of the business to Henry Huenink in 1895, and for the next fifteen years it was referred to as the Huenink Brothers Cheese Factory. Cheesemaking was probably discontinued at this location in about 1910 because at that time the Hueninks established the Cedar Grove Creamery along the present Union Avenue, east of the railroad tracks. From that point on, milk from their former cheese factory patrons was probably handled by the creamery.

The Huenink Brothers Cheese Factory building was sold in 1911 to G.W. Soerens, a blacksmith. John Ruesink joined him as a partner in 1917. John Roelse and Albert Rusch used the building for a time after that. By the mid-1900s the building was used by John Ruesink and his son Wayne for their plumbing and heating business. Wayne Ruesink was the last owner of the building before it was transformed into a museum in the mid-1970s.

### **Sesquicentennial Celebration**

In the context of the celebration of the founding of the Village of Cedar Grove, we have the privilege of using the word “sesquicentennial” only once. This is certainly a notable milestone that should not be ignored. The village board, the Holland Guild Gezelschap, and a specially-appointed sesquicentennial committee all worked on ways to help Cedar Grove celebrate its 150th birthday.

At the village’s centennial celebration in 1947, this little town began the tradition of recognizing and promoting its Dutch heritage with a spectacular Holland Festival. The highlight of that

event was a historical pageant involving more than 600 people. Presenting a revised version of that pageant seemed an appropriate way to observe the village's sesquicentennial. The pageant's original scripts were read, admired, and marveled at. After much consideration it was determined that such an ambitious project was almost an impossibility in today's much-too-hectic world with so many responsibilities and demands on people's time. The pageant will remain a wonderful memory in the hearts and minds of those fortunate enough to have witnessed it or even participate in it. A delightful memory book of the pageant is available at the village library for everyone to enjoy.

But our sesquicentennial will not go unobserved. As of this writing, several projects big and small are in the works and there might even be some surprises. To highlight our community during its 150th year, a new welcome sign greets friends and guests as they enter the village. New, festive banners adorn Main Street, and in what is surely a trademark of our Dutch heritage, villagers have been encouraged to deck out their yards and gardens with even more flowers. Area residents have been asked to dust off their costumes and wooden shoes for the 1997 Holland Festival. Churches, businesses, and service organizations have been urged to enter floats in the Holland Festival parade.

Our school children wrapped up the 1996-1997 school year with an opportunity to hear cultural speakers, complete special art projects, and sample traditional Dutch foods. They even did a little klompen dancing during a special heritage day at the school. Our local school children also enjoyed springtime visits to Het Museum.

As a special flashback, all Klompen Dansers from the originals in 1947 to the present have been invited to appear at the Sesquicentennial Holland Festival. We particularly acknowledge the dancers that so wonderfully represented Cedar Grove in Washington, D.C. during our nation's great bicentennial parade in 1976.

The same goes for past Holland Festival Queens and queen contestants. They, too, have been invited back to make an appearance and be honored at the "Scenes of the Past" program during the 1997 Holland Festival. This special feature offers an opportunity to see elaborate costumes representing the Netherlands' various provinces and to learn about the origins and significance

of the details involved.

Over the years the Holland Festival Players have presented a variety of traditional musicals and musical comedies. This sesquicentennial year “The Red Mill,” a charming Dutch musical-comedy, is being presented. This wonderful production was last presented in 1976. The Holland Festival Players never disappoint us and always offer a beautiful, well-done production that is a treat to attend. “The Red Mill” is no exception.

For the first time ever, our festival includes a colorful fireworks display. As everyone knows, kids of all ages love fireworks. What better way to put an exclamation point on a celebration!

Several commemorative items are available to enjoy and display, perhaps even to become treasured keepsakes. A blanket in shades of Delft blue on a cream background is available for purchase. It attractively displays a variety of prominent buildings representing different eras of Cedar Grove’s history. Featured as the centerpiece is DeVisch windmill. Other buildings include past and present schools, the Memorial Park bandstand, the old village hall, the last railroad depot, Het Museum, the original Citizens State Bank, and the village churches in appropriate placement as the village’s four cornerstones.

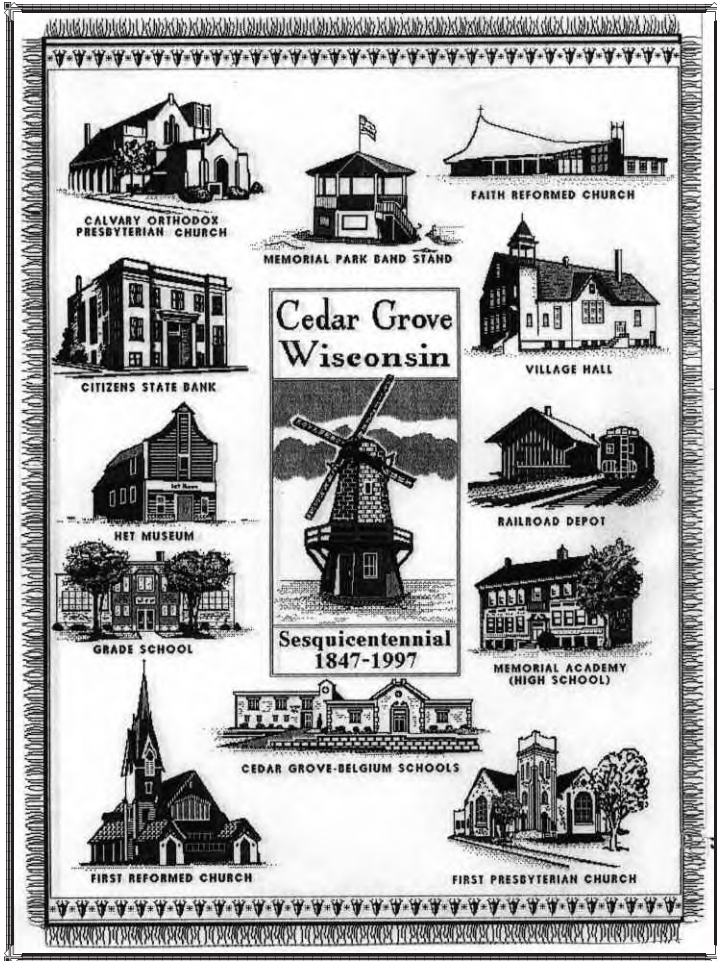
A Delft candy or trinket dish which was specially designed and imported from Holland is also available. The covered dish shows DeVisch windmill and has sesquicentennial information printed on it. Locally-designed T-shirts and sweatshirts commemorating the village’s 150th anniversary are also available for young and old to wear and enjoy.

And finally, you hold in your hands a book representing over 1,200 hours of research, writing, and editing by local citizens. Every attempt has been made to accurately portray Cedar Grove’s history and people, their aspirations, values, and heritage. We sincerely hope that *Cedar Grove, Wisconsin--150 Years of Dutch-American Tradition* holds a place of honor on your bookshelf for many generations.

The Village of Cedar Grove surrounded by the Township of Holland in Sheboygan County has reached another milestone. It has attained a landmark year, its sesquicentennial! The village has prospered and grown over the years but also struggled through the Great Depression and numerous wars with the rest of



the nation. Cedar Grove has weathered winter blizzards and summer storms. Some of Cedar Grove's sons and daughters have taken their gifts and talents to become blessings in other communities. Others have either stayed in or returned to this community helping keep the area's heritage, beliefs, and values alive. Still others have arrived as newcomers, putting down their roots to join the network that forms this community's foundation.



Sesquicentennial Afghan (Blanket)  
(Photo courtesy of Leona Theune)



Sesquicentennial T-Shirt  
(Photo courtesy Leona Theune)



Sesquicentennial Candy Dish  
(Photo courtesy Leona Theune)



Bill Soerens and Henry Harmelink  
at a Portrait Studio in approximately 1903  
(Photo Courtesy Sheboygan County Historical Research Center)

## – Chapter Sixteen – Heroes and Legends

By Ralph DeSmidt

**E**ditors Note: Ralph DeSmidt is a lifelong resident of the Village of Cedar Grove. He has successfully operated a variety of businesses within the village over the past forty years. Throughout that time he participated in a number of service organizations, playing important roles in the revival of the Holland Festival and construction of DeVisch windmill. Whether at Smitty's Sweet Shop during the 1950s and 1960s, at DeSmidt's [DeZwaan] Restaurant during the 1970s and 1980s, or at DeSmidt's Winkel van de Achterhoek during the 1990s, one could not do business with Mr. DeSmidt without hearing recollections of this village and its people. Every resident of this village can undoubtedly name individuals who have had a significant impact on them. The following represent some of the heroes and legends of this area as perceived by Mr. DeSmidt.

\* \* \*

When I was asked to do these short stories regarding so called "legends in their time," I first wondered who these people might be. But as I thought, many names came to mind quickly. I believe that these people exemplify the true spirit of this community. While some worthy people may have been overlooked, these are the individuals that I recall most vividly.

### **Henry Teunissen**

Henry was an immigrant who farmed quite successfully in this area for many years. He was a smaller man with bright eyes and a good strong build. Henry also did field tiling, and generally succeeded at whatever he tried. To say he came to America penniless

would of course be incorrect. His pockets did reportedly hold less than a dollar when he reached the Town of Holland, but things did get better. He recalled "running" a wheelbarrow filled with concrete on a building site for about fifty cents a day, but this was just the start of this young Dutch entrepreneur's rise to the top.

Henry raised a large family and many of his descendents still live in the Cedar Grove area. His sharing of tall tales over a cup of coffee allowed me the pleasure of knowing this kind and imaginative gentleman. He knew he was tough and the loss of both thumbs attested to that fact, but he was savvy enough to rise from adversity and humble enough to be a likable, interesting legend in his own time.

### **Henry Harmelink**

"Painter Hank" was a puckish sort with a ready wit, marvelous recall, great personality, and engaging smile. Over the years he provided a wide variety of services for this community including positions as an undertaker's assistant, a house painter, a procurer of antiques, and an assistant mover of large structures such as the Reformed Church building that became the local funeral home in the early 1900s.

His trump cards were many. He was charming, happy, a good joke teller, and he had a disarming wit that will always allow his memory to be enjoyed. When he and his buddy, Con Kummers, stopped in for coffee, Hank's stories were enjoyed by young and old alike. This plucky gentleman and his old "Model A" Ford will long be remembered.

### **Dr. Clarence Meeusen**

Dr. Meeusen was the Village of Cedar Grove's first true veterinarian. He is the oldest of four sons born to Mr. and Mrs. Martin Meeusen. He was a member of the armed forces, served in India, graduated from Iowa State University, and set up his first practice here in Cedar Grove in the "heart of America's dairyland." At that time, most farms in the Town of Holland and surrounding townships were the eighty-acre, twenty-cow, six-pig, one-hundred-leghorn, ten-pigeon size. Dr. Meeusen solved the problem of most farmers trying to doctor their own animals and certainly helped many farmers increase the

efficiency of their herds.

Dr. Meeusen also served as village president and was an active Gideon and church officer setting him apart as a legend in his time, rising up and achieving success.

### **Dr. Anthony Voskuil**

Dr. Voskuil was a local boy who rose to become one of the top medical doctors in this community's history. Not only did he afford the community a rare "country doctor" who made house calls, but he brought over ninety-nine percent of the local Dutch kids into the world from the 1920s through the mid-1940s. Some of the new arrivals undoubtedly received a free ride because when Dr. Voskuil retired, his accounts receivable book was burned. Dr. Voskuil continued practicing medicine in the area even after a stroke prevented him from driving. I'll never forget Kathryn TeKulve chauffeuring Dr. Voskuil around in that new gray 1946 Ford.

### **Lamont Lammers**

Lamont's name used in this context might raise a few eyebrows, but that's alright. I've known this guy longer than most, and I have to admit he's a legend if only to those who knew him as a youngster. Lamont was a childhood friend and neighbor for a long time. He was a prankster like many of us were in those days. He played marbles on the railroad depot platform and could throw a rock over the old grain elevator when most of us were lucky to reach the roof. He was also interested in chemistry, and we experimented with calcium carbide on a vacant lot behind the Ebbers Hardware Store. Those loud explosions eventually made us move our laboratory to Lamont's backyard on Center Avenue.

Pitching a baseball was his genuine forte. He had a fastball that humped when he was only fourteen years old, had a great high school career, and a stint in professional ball. In a high school doubleheader he won the first game as pitcher and then as center-fielder threw a perfect strike, no bounces, to get a runner at home plate. His coach Earl Witte called him "Flash" and that nickname stuck. A family man, antiquer, hard worker, fine craftsman and friend, Flash is a "legend in his own time."

### **William Potts**

If Bill Potts were to be overlooked in picking the outstanding people of the past, it would be an oversight of great proportion. Everyone in Cedar Grove knew Bill. I feel I knew him well. He was a World War I veteran, a customer, a neighbor, and one of the most gentle men I was gifted to know. He faulted no one. His life was composed of hard work followed by more very hard work. He worked in our local foundries for many years but also dug by hand most of the cemetery graves and sewer and water laterals within the village through the 1930s and 1940s.

I related well to Bill as he also ran an early sweet shop just north of the bakery. To his dying day, Bill carried a small *Carferry* spiral notebook with his accounts due from Memorial Academy students. Bill and his landlady Hattie Veldhorst are long gone to a reward certainly worthy of these fine Christian people whom everyone knew and loved. Not bad for a violin-playing, Bible-believing, gentle man with epilepsy.

### **Delia Voskuil**

Del was a happy, chatty, vivacious lady of the finest kind. She was our local *Sheboygan Press* reporter and a post office employee. She was a neighbor and a friend and always had time for the kids in our neighborhood. Her husband Ed was a partner with his brother Lou in the housepainting business. I'll always remember Del's ability to chat with every neighbor as she walked to work as happy as a lark. It was obvious where she found all those interesting news items. The entire village waited each and every Thursday for her column of happenings from Cedar Grove to appear in the *Sheboygan Press*. Without that, how would we have known what was going on? Delia was one of our village's very special ladies.

### **Mariett Poppe**

Mariett was one of the most impressive ladies I have ever met. Her style, class, and intellect were all evident, yet she never allowed anyone to feel inferior. She was open-minded yet conservative. She was always helpful and never disruptive. At the time of Mrs. Poppe's tragic and untimely passing, I told my wife "our village structure has been terribly wounded." Others would



have to step into her place. That place would be large and would require a special person.

Mrs. Poppe was instrumental in our original centennial celebration. She wrote, supported, and made suggestions at every level. She helped me greatly in organizing the first two Holland Festival Queen Pageants and also helped me organize our first Holland Festival Art Show. If you asked, she knew; if she didn't know, she found out! I still miss her as a friend and I suspect many others do as well. Her husband Con, our former bank president, still resides in the village.

### **Alvin DeBruine**

"Bruno" will always be remembered as one of the original bus drivers for the Cedar Grove School District. Back in the days of bag lunches and great basketball teams Bruno got you there, in and out of snow banks, back to the sweet shop and all of that jazz (or rock and roll) of the 1960s.

Bruno was a happy guy who didn't know anyone except friends. He always had a big smile and wave for all. He was a trucker with an attitude and it was always positive. He respected students and adults and left a genuine emptiness after his untimely passing. His wife Bernice still resides in Cedar Grove.

### **Arthur Voskuil**

To have known this kind, intelligent, ordinary man is a privilege. His intellect and experience are without bounds. Mr. Voskuil's age is beyond average, but so are his qualities. As a World War I veteran, his military experience included along with several other doughboys an incursion into northern Russia to fight the Bolsheviks in 1919 along with the British, Czechs, French, and Japanese. His stories and recall of this period were vivid and highly interesting. I feel privileged to know this Christian gentleman and his fine family. Surely he deserves to be called a "legend in his time."

### **Herbert Molter**

My earliest recollections of Herb Molter are of his yard and garden in the spring. His blooming fruit trees, magnolia, and bulb flowers made his Main Street residence most inviting. In conver-

sations with him I learned much about pruning, grafting, and propagating. His knowledge seemed unending. Herb sold agricultural periodicals throughout Wisconsin and did well at it during the depression and later. He would take almost anything in payment for subscriptions, and it kept him supplied with unusual varieties of poultry and plant life.

Herb's wife Phoebe was a fine lady--neat, attractive and a credit to her family. Herb's grandsons ran his fruit and vegetable stand each year, and people from all around came to purchase his fine, organic, fresh produce. His skills will long be remembered by all who knew him.

### **Frieda Wieberdink**

Frieda was one of my Sunday School teachers. She was also my childrens' Sunday School teacher. That in itself characterizes her long-term Christian commitment. Frieda lost her husband early in life which left this diminutive lady with a large family to support during what were called the "hard times." However she was always there to volunteer, willing to give of what she had and showing a spirit all could admire.

I worked with Frieda at the Calumet Dutch Canning Company during World War II when the work force consisted primarily of women, boys fourteen to eighteen years old, and German prisoners of war. Everyone enjoyed Frieda's good spirits and ready smile. To call her a "legend in her time" is in fact the case. This lady was known and admired by our entire community and will long be remembered and spoken of positively.

### **Austin Voskuil**

I have known Austin my entire life and have been impressed with him often. I have known him as a fellow church member, teacher, self-taught philosophical patron of God's word, as well as a parent, and one who always thought of others first. If your question involved local history, he could find the answer. If you needed help regarding any church-related question, Austin knew and could explain it clearly and humbly. Austin lost his wife early and had to raise his fine family and provide for them. His family grew well and straight, were ambitious, intelligent, and successful, using the social skills they had been gifted with.

I was privileged to visit our native roots in Aalten, Netherlands with Austin, and we visited the cemetery where his family who had stayed behind were interred. While happy that we could be there, the experience brought tears to our eyes. I feel privileged to know such a fine man.

### Marvin Duenk

Marv has been my friend for a very long time. In some ways we are a lot alike. We both have physical problems, like a good prank, and enjoy the unexpected. We even were married on the same day. Over the years I have seen many sides of this talented gentleman. This man has a great sense of humor with the ability to be very serious if required.

I got to know Marv after he graduated from high school, and his front yard was a gathering place for pranksters of all kinds--Wayne VanDriest, Mike Schreurs, Don Bruggink, and more. I guess these "nerds," if you wish, gathered on North Main Street to plan or conceive that one great never-before-tried prank. Pranks included placing a lady's purse on the street only to be quickly pulled away when a passerby stopped to pick it up, or placing what appeared to be a one-hundred pound bag of sugar on the shoulder of the road during the war when sugar was rationed quite severely. In actuality the bag was an empty sugar sack that had been filled with sand and then painstakingly sewn shut. While hardly knee-slappers today theses antics brought down the house then.

When Marv took over Standard Printing from Henry Grotenhuis, kids often stopped in at the corner of Main Street and Union Avenue to "shoot the breeze" and just chat. Marv was always hospitable and interesting. When he later built his new print shop, Marv expanded into Christian book sales and gave the village a first-class business. Marv always had time for a good laugh at the old Smitty's Sweet Shop which was a hangout for guys who enjoyed a laugh. No one was exempt as Marv, Don Hilbelink, Rich Dykstra, Ken VerGowe, Jim Bruce, and others recalled past jokes and pranks including the *Jolly Green Giant* caper, the *Cheeseburger with Extra Butter* or *Where are the Napkins?* episode, and the never-to-be-forgotten *Should We Go Ahead with the Car Repair* schtick. Then there was always the

question of the Guinness record for the longest distance a car might be driven in reverse.

Needless to say, this gentleman was versatile. His demeanor is quiet and gentle, his persona friendly and giving, his skills diverse, and his friendship revered. Marvin is a man who gave much to his village and asked very little in return. He truly is a "legend in his time."

### **Bernard Huenink**

Bern Huenink must be included in any listing of people who meant a great deal to this community. Bern was loved by everyone who knew him. His quiet, unassuming nature was admired by all, and when he voiced his opinion it was obvious that a great deal of thought had gone into it. Bern served this community in many different ways over the years including positions within his church, the village, and several local service clubs. He was a generous parent and husband. I served with Bern on a garden club board and learned much from him about a subject he knew well. The community was privileged to have had Bern Huenink as a resident.

### **Arthur Champagne**

Art first came to Cedar Grove in the mid-1940s and worked as a foreman at the Musebeck Shoe Company. His arrival signaled a dynasty in-the-making. Art, who had lost his wife, once played and coached baseball in the Eastern League. While making shoes was his vocation, baseball was his love.

At about the time Art arrived in Cedar Grove, many young men were returning from service in great physical shape and looking for something to do. Softball was the game of choice in this area and every small town had lights and a diamond not unlike the "Field of Dreams," sculpted out of a cornfield but the pride of the village. Art's first practices were held indoors and the response was overwhelming. The old grade-school gymnasium provided a warm, dry location for stiff arms and legs to get into shape. Bunting, something new around here, was to be his secret weapon and coupled with the speed these kids possessed, good things were about to happen. I was Art's scorekeeper and manager, and I loved it. The team was great with many outstanding

players like Jake Kruis, Carroll Huenink, Bud Huenink, Elmo DeSmith, LaVern Prinsen, Red Bruggink, Ken TenHaken, Carl DuMez, Orlie Navis and so many more. Art's teams were the pride of the village and gave Cedar Grove many trophies and even more great memories.

Art, the quiet, good-looking, unassuming gentleman, brought a legend to Cedar Grove and when he retired, he allowed me the privilege of coaching the kids he left, all with a desire to win and succeed. It was a pleasure not only to know this gentle giant but to recall the impact he had on so many. Thank you, Art, and thanks for the memories.

### **Ellsworth TeRonde**

Ells was all that any village could hope for among its citizens. The TeRonde family home, recently acquired by Het Museum board, is being readied for a public museum to open in the summer of 1997, the fulfillment of a dream that Ells spoke of often before his passing. Ells was molded in the cast of a citizen's citizen. His was to serve his church, his village, his community, his Lord. He was my first Boy Scout leader and spirited many of his "troopers" to Eagle, Star, and Life Scout levels. His bird carvings and interest in wildlife, ecology, and local Indian history will be remembered by many. His spontaneous, cheerful whistling is missed by a community who loved him.

# THE ROYAL VISIT

Cedar Grove, Wisconsin

October 2, 1997



Her Royal Highness  
Princess Margriet of the Netherlands  
and Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven

## – Chapter Seventeen –

### The Royal Visit

**T**hursday October 2, 1997 was a very busy day in the Village of Cedar Grove. By sunrise, village employees and dozens of volunteers were hard at work in the village park cordoning off walkways, decorating the park's bandstand, and setting up temporary seating for a very special event. Within just hours, Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands and Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven would be in Cedar Grove to help celebrate the village's 150th anniversary.

By 11:00 a.m. the neatly-trimmed park was bustling with activity. School children lined the park's walkway holding posters, banners, gifts, and flowers. Young mothers with tots in tow found the perfect location to observe the day's activities. Volunteers hurried to see that every last detail was properly attended to. Dutch officials, as well as federal, state and county security personnel, patrolled the area, enhancing the level of excitement.

Princess Margriet, sister of Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, represents Her Majesty the Queen at a wide variety of official functions at locations around the world. Princess Margriet's husband, Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven, frequently travels with her. For quite some time prior to Cedar Grove's visit, the Royal Couple had been scheduled to participate in sesquicentennial celebrations in Pella, Iowa, and Holland and Zeeland, Michigan as well as to attend ceremonies at St. Norbert College in DePere, Wisconsin in anticipation of the school's centennial in 1998. Cedar Grove was added to the Royal Couple's itinerary in early 1997.

The Royal Couple arrived in Cedar Grove at 11:05 a.m. on Thursday October 2, 1997 ending nearly nine months of anxious anticipation. And from the moment they arrived, the poised, attractive couple presented themselves in a manner befitting royalty.





Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Diana Nett as the Royal Couple and Program Participants Approach the Park Bandstand.  
(Photo Courtesy Bill Schanen IV, the *Ozaukee Press*)

At 11:25 a.m., using protocol prescribed by the Royal Couple's advance team, Princess Margriet was escorted into the park by Richard Dykstra, with Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven escorted by Diana Nett. As the Royal Couple proceeded down the walkway they paused briefly to greet young children and accept some of their gifts. Wide, genuine smiles were extended to the crowd by both Princess Margriet and Mr. Van Vollenhoven, and the crowd responded in kind.

After reaching the bandstand seven-year-old Jordan Dykstra, in traditional Dutch dress, extended a brief word of welcome and presented Princess Margriet with a bouquet of orange roses. Then, hearts of onlookers swelled with pride as the combined Cedar Grove-Belgium, Oostburg, and Sheboygan County Christian High School bands played the Dutch and American national anthems.

The October 1997 visit to Cedar Grove is believed to be the first time Dutch Royalty has joined a Sheboygan County community in celebrating its heritage. But on this particular day it

didn't matter if you were of Dutch descent. The Royal Visit provided a source of pride for all those who now call this community home, who respect the heritage and values of those who came to this place before them.

In addressing the crowd, Princess Margriet first thanked several organizations for the gifts they presented. She then offered heartfelt thanks to the community's veterans for helping liberate Europe during World War II. In discussing the bond between the Netherlands and the Village of Cedar Grove she went on to say:

*Here today we realize how vibrant this community is. The expectations of the immigrants that came to America, and especially to this place 150 years ago, indeed have been surpassed. The pioneering spirit of the first immigrants clearly survived the generations. It was inherited by the present inhabitants who made their town a very dear corner of the United States.*

The visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Mr. Van Vollenhoven provided the Village of Cedar Grove with a most wonderful gift to help celebrate its sesquicentennial year. There could not have been a more fitting closure to the year's festivities. Hopefully the Royal Couple and all those who traveled with them felt the same sense of pride as Dutch and American flags waved side-by-side above them.

### **Invitation and Planning**

The seeds of the Royal Visit were planted during a casual telephone conversation on January 12, 1997. During that conversation, Jim Dykstra, a Cedar Grove native who now works in Washington D.C., and who regularly attends Dutch-American programs at the Royal Netherlands Embassy there, mentioned to his brother that a member of the Dutch Royal Family might be visiting the midwest sometime in autumn. Realizing that the Royal Visit would include locations so near, a decision was quickly made to extend an invitation from the Village of Cedar Grove as well. By January 14 a letter of invitation had been written by Richard Dykstra, was approved by the Cedar Grove Village Board and Village President Erwin Claussen, and was sent to the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C.

Within just weeks of sending the invitation, before any official correspondence had been received from the Royal Netherlands Embassy, Village of Cedar Grove officials received a telephone call from a company wanting to sell Dutch and American flags for the upcoming visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands. The company had received advance notice that Princess Margriet would be visiting Cedar Grove in early October of 1997. While that telephone call was encouraging, it was not very official, so the village anxiously awaited a response from the Royal Netherlands Embassy before announcing the anticipated visit. Then, in mid-February, an official reply was received from Mr. Adriaan Jacobovits de Szeged, Ambassador of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, stating in part:

*Upon receipt of your letter I have asked the Foreign Ministry in The Hague to include Cedar Grove in the list of places to be visited by a member of the Dutch Royal Family...*

*As soon as we have more information we will contact you. I will definitely make every effort to try to see that Cedar Grove is included in the schedule.*

Upon receiving this favorable response, Richard Dykstra asked village librarian Diana Nett to serve as a liaison between the Village of Cedar Grove and Dutch dignitaries in coordinating the Royal Visit. Diana accepted the responsibility immediately in what turned out to be a formidable task. Over the next seven months, Diana handled an estimated fifty telephone calls and twenty-five faxes in an effort to finalize plans for the Royal Visit. The bulk of the correspondence was with the Dutch Consulate in Chicago, the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C., and with Mr. Harry Maier, from St. Norbert College, who was coordinating the Royal Visit to their campus. Hundreds of additional telephone calls, faxes, and personal conversations occurred among Royal Visit Committee members while the event was being planned. A complete diary of correspondence leading up to the Royal Visit is available at the Cedar Grove Public Library along with a photo album, scrap book, and video tape commemorating the historic event.

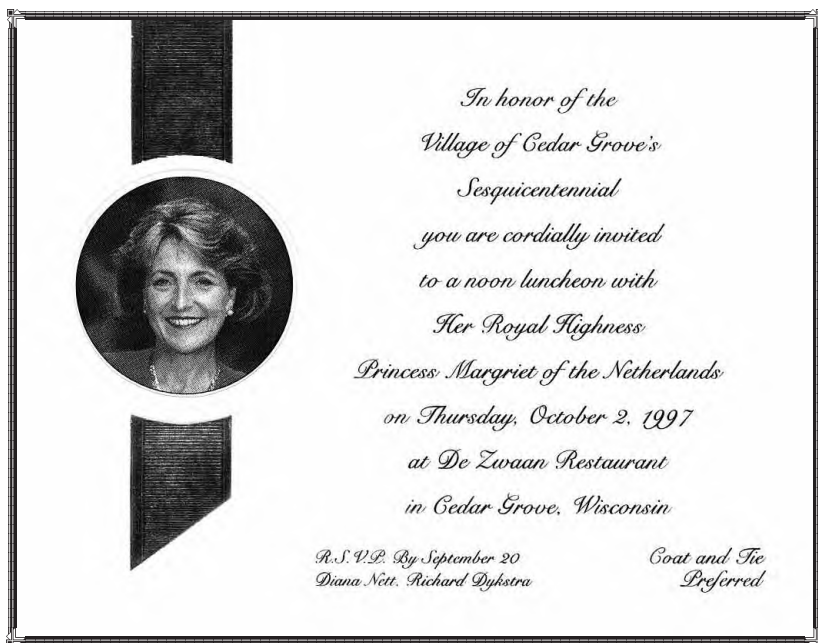
The initial optimism regarding the Royal Couple's visit to

Cedar Grove was dampened briefly from time-to-time as travel plans, dates, and times were changed. This was especially true when it was learned that the Royal Couple's midwest tour was being shortened by one day. Since the Village of Cedar Grove was both the smallest community to be included in the tour and the last community added to the tour, there was some concern that Cedar Grove might be excluded in the new, abbreviated schedule. The Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C. and the Dutch Consulate in Chicago stayed true to their word, however, and Cedar Grove was not deleted from the tour. Instead, activities at several other locations were trimmed somewhat to accommodate the abbreviated tour.

One difficulty encountered during the early months of planning stemmed from the fact that the Dutch Consulate in Chicago was in transition during that time. While Cedar Grove's Royal Visit was being planned, Diana Nett communicated with former Consul General Mr. Hank Ravis, interim Consul General Mr. Jan Hesselning, and newly-appointed Consul General Mr. Gilbert H.A. Monod de Froideville, as well as with one or more secretaries within the office. Throughout this transitional period, the person spoken to at the Dutch Consulate in Chicago was not always aware of the response originally provided by the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C. Once the Chicago office was provided copies of the Village of Cedar Grove's invitation and the Ambassador of the Netherlands' response, and once the transition period had passed within the Dutch Consulate in Chicago, planning moved along more smoothly.

By May of 1997 Cedar Grove's Royal Visit Committee learned that a noon meal would be required for the Royal Couple and their entourage. Initially, consideration was given to having a combined program and noon luncheon during the Royal Visit. Then, in realizing that this would limit the number of people who could see and hear Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet, the schedule was changed to include a brief program in Veterans Memorial Park followed by a noon luncheon at DeZwaan Restaurant.

Even after there was a relative certainty that the Royal Visit would take place and tentative plans were in place, significant changes occurred. On July 28 the Royal Visit Committee learned



The Royal-Visit Luncheon Invitation.

that the date of the visit to Cedar Grove was being changed from October 1 to October 2. An additional complication in planning the Royal Visit stemmed from the fact that until the Royal Couple's advance team met with officials in Cedar Grove, no location for the program could be finalized, no advertising could be done, and no programs could be printed since the advance team had to approve of every detail involved.

The Royal Couple's advance team arrived in Cedar Grove for a meeting at the library on Wednesday September 10, 1998, just three weeks before the Royal Visit. While the advance team liked the idea of a program in the park and liked the idea of a noon luncheon at DeZwaan Restaurant, they said that in all likelihood Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet would not address the crowd as had been hoped. When asked if Princess Margriet could offer a very brief response following the presentation of gifts from several local groups, the advance team said that they would see, but did not sound very optimistic about it. Then a week later, just before the event's official program was printed, word was received that Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet would speak

briefly to the crowd. Her "Response" was quickly reinserted into the event's official program with a great sigh of relief, for the Royal Visit Committee realized how many people would have been disappointed if Princess Margriet had chosen not to speak.

By September 16 the Royal Couple's advance team had approved the schedule of events proposed for the upcoming visit. At that time, Leona Theune joined Diana Nett and Richard Dykstra on the Royal Visit Committee. Over the next two weeks committee members finalized plans and began to coordinate the day's activities in detail. Following the event, the Royal Visit Committee gratefully acknowledged the assistance of the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C., the Dutch Consulate in Chicago, Mr. Harry Maier of St. Norbert College, Village of Cedar Grove employees, the Holland Guild Gezelschap, and all of the volunteers who helped make the Royal Visit possible.

While the Royal Couple was only in the Village of Cedar Grove for two-and-one-half hours on October 2, 1997, those two-and-one-half hours are perhaps the most special in the history of the village. One of the Netherlands' most-traveled ambassadors of good will, a member of the Royal Family who represents her nation at a variety of very important functions around the world, was in the tiny Village of Cedar Grove addressing its very proud citizens. As Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet addressed the crowd, and as she and her husband talked more informally with luncheon guests, one could not help but be impressed with the warmth, charm, and sincerity of the Royal Couple, of Consul General Gilbert H.A. Monod de Froideville, and of all those who traveled with them.

### **Program In the Park**

In the middle of the day, in the middle of the week, on October 2, 1997 an estimated two thousand people turned out to see and hear Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands and her husband, Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven. The crowd included children from Cedar Grove-Belgium Elementary School, Oostburg Christian School and St. Mary's School in Lake Church. Many of the children had worked for days on posters and banners to welcome the Royal Couple. The children lined the path used to escort the Royal Couple from the



The Crowd at Veterans Memorial Park, October 2, 1997.



Children Line the Walkway at Veterans Memorial Park as They Await the Arrival of Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven.  
(Photo Courtesy Jim Smithers)



First Reformed Church parking lot to the park bandstand.

The Royal Couple and their entourage, with State Patrol escort, arrived in Cedar Grove at 11:05 a.m., about fifteen minutes earlier than expected. The group spent the next twenty minutes in the First Reformed Church, freshening up and chatting with program participants. At one point Princess Margriet asked Jordan Dykstra if she was nervous about participating in the program. Jordan's response was probably predictable for a seven-year old. While she was somewhat nervous about meeting royalty, she seemed more concerned about how she would perform in front of her classmates, who were all going to be there.

As anyone who lives in Wisconsin knows, scheduling an event outdoors in October can be a risky proposition. Early-October weather can range anywhere from sunny and warm to cold with snow flurries. But the weather could not have been nicer on this particular October day, with plenty of sunshine and the



Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet on the Steps of the Bandstand.  
(Photo Courtesy Bill Schanen IV, the *Ozaukee Press*)

temperature approaching seventy degrees. In the event of inclement weather, the program would have been moved indoors to the Cedar Grove-Belgium Elementary School gymnasium, with the overflow crowd watching by closed-circuit television in the high school auditorium. Fortunately this contingency plan became totally unnecessary.

Because the Royal Couple would be in Cedar Grove for only a short time, and because that time necessarily included a luncheon for the Royal Couple and their entourage, the program in the park was kept brief and to the point. Key elements, compressed into the program's thirty-minute time-frame, included a formal welcome by Jordan Dykstra, playing of the Dutch and American National Anthems by the combined Cedar Grove-Belgium, Oostburg, and Sheboygan County Christian High School bands, an Invocation by Rev. Stephen Pike, a brief review of the history of the Village of Cedar Grove as requested by the Royal Couple's advance team, presentation of gifts to the Royal Couple by several local organizations, and a response by Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands.

While the invitation to the Royal Couple was initially extended on behalf of the Village of Cedar Grove's sesquicentennial, the program in the park was expanded to recognize the strong Dutch heritage that also exists within the Township of Holland, the Village of Oostburg, and the rest of Sheboygan County.

The visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven received significant media attention. The event was covered by local radio stations, several radio and television stations from Milwaukee, the *Sheboygan Press*, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, the *Ozaukee Press*, the *Plymouth Review*, the *Random Lake Sounder*, and the *Lakeland College Update*. One photograph, taken just after Jordan Dykstra presented Princess Margriet with a bouquet of orange roses, was featured on the front page of the October 3, 1997 *Sheboygan Press*. The subject photograph then went out onto the *Associated Press* wire and appeared in dozens of additional newspapers throughout the United States and the Netherlands. The photograph made a second appearance in the *Sheboygan Press* on December 31, 1997 in a review of the year's top news stories.



Jordan Dykstra with Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven,  
Just After Princess Margriet was Presented with a Bouquet of Orange Roses.  
(Photo Courtesy Gary Klein, the *Sheboygan Press*)

A complete transcript of the program in Veterans Memorial Park is as follows:

**Richard Dykstra**

"Good Morning, and welcome to this very historic event. This is believed to be the first time in the 160-year history of Sheboygan County that Dutch Royalty has visited the county to help a community celebrate its heritage, and we're delighted that so many people could be a part of this [celebration] today."

[Jordan Dykstra presents Princess Margriet with a bouquet of orange roses]

**Jordan Dykstra**

"Your Royal Highness; On behalf of the Village of Cedar Grove and all of the Dutch in Sheboygan County, we welcome you."

**Richard Dykstra**

"At this time would you please rise for the playing of the Dutch and American National Anthems by the combined Cedar Grove-Belgium, Oostburg, and Sheboygan County Christian High School bands."

[Dutch and American National Anthems]



Richard Dykstra with her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven,  
Just Prior to the Playing of the Dutch and American National Anthems.  
(Photo Courtesy Bill Schanen IV, the *Ozaukee Press*)

**Richard Dykstra**

"The Reverend Pieter Zonne is generally credited with founding the Village of Cedar Grove in 1847. Within a year Reverend Zonne had organized a church congregation within the young settlement. That church went on to become the First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove. Now, 150-years later, First Presbyterian is one of four village churches ministering to the spiritual needs of this community, and in one way or another the three additional churches all evolved from Reverend Zonne's original congregation."

"At this time Reverend Stephen Pike, present pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove, will present the invocation."

[Richard Dykstra leaves the podium and Rev. Pike approaches]

**Reverend Stephen Pike**

"Please join me in prayer... Almighty God, today we are gathered to mark and to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the founding of Cedar Grove, and the rich Dutch and Christian heritage that its founders have brought here with them. We give thanks to you for having established and sustained this people and this community over the many years, and we praise you for the strong Christian faith that has by your grace resided in your people here over the decades. Indeed you have continued to be both their rock and their redeemer."

"We thank you for giving us this opportunity to remember who we are and just who it is that is the source of our many blessings, and we thank you for all who have come to join us on this special day to give thanks... for our honored guests Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven."

"Grant us now as we celebrate the faith and the wisdom to realize that it has only been by your grace that this community has flourished and it will continue to do so only by that same grace. We ask this all in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ...Amen."

[Reverend Pike leaves the podium and Richard Dykstra returns]

**Richard Dykstra**

"Between the autumn of 1846 and the spring of 1847 several parties, each under the leadership of a prominent Dutch minister, immigrated to the United States from the Netherlands. While some thought had apparently been given to establishing one large Dutch settlement in the United States after all of the individual parties had arrived, the end result was quite different. Due to closed waterways and other travel difficulties brought on by the

onset of winter, and due to fundamental differences in the type of landscape and soil conditions desired by each party's leader, the single large settlement never materialized. Instead, several individual settlements were established in distinctly different areas of our nation's midwest. Rev. H.P. Scholte established a settlement in what is now Pella Iowa, Rev. A.C. Van Raalte established settlements in and around what is now Holland, Michigan, and Rev. Pieter Zonne, after ministering briefly to the needs of the Dutch in Milwaukee, led a group of settlers here to what is now the Village of Cedar Grove. Within a very brief time, numerous other Dutch settlements were established throughout the midwest, as well."

"After establishing their individual settlements, the leaders of these communities became fierce competitors as each tried hard to lure new Dutch immigrants to his own particular region. The means used to attract new settlers often included exaggerations about each leader's own community, as well as disparaging remarks about the locations of their competitors."

"Exaggerations were actually expounded by both the leaders and residents of the young Dutch settlements. During the late 1800s, one young woman recounted how her family in the Netherlands had received a letter from Gert Hendrik Kolste of Cedar Grove in 1847. The letter encouraged some of Kolste's friends and other acquaintances to join him in Sheboygan County where, as Mr. Kolste had written, ... *the land could be had for practically nothing, where deer were so plentiful that fresh meat was always to be had, where plums could be picked from the window and the finest sugar oozed out of trees.* Mr. Kolste advised his friends from the Netherlands to come to America and settle in Sheboygan County."

"While many new Dutch immigrants continued to settle in our nation's midwest throughout the second half of the nineteenth century, Dutch settlements here in Sheboygan County grew at a much slower pace than the others. But one would have a hard time finding any local residents who have a problem with that fact. For 150 years, Dutch-Americans in Cedar Grove, Oostburg,

the Town of Holland, and other parts of Sheboygan County have enjoyed a rural lifestyle, pastoral setting, and closeness of community that are the envy of many. And throughout this time, area residents have shared a kindred spirit with the Netherlands, preserving many Dutch customs and traditions. It should be evident to even the most casual observer that the Dutch of Sheboygan County are very proud of their heritage."

"Today, as the Village of Cedar Grove celebrates its 150th anniversary, we are very pleased and honored to host the visit of Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands and her husband Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven. We are also pleased to share this day with our friends from the neighboring Village of Oostburg, the Township of Holland, and those of Dutch ancestry from throughout Sheboygan County."

"We also note that this year represents the 150th anniversary of an event that had a significant impact on the early Dutch settlements in this area. In November of 1847, the propeller ship the Phoenix caught fire and sank off Sheboygan's shore. Just twenty-four of the more than 175 Dutch immigrants aboard survived."

"As a part of today's program, the Village of Oostburg, the Phoenix Sesquicentennial Committee, and the Village of Cedar Grove's Sesquicentennial Committee will be presenting Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet with gifts to commemorate today's celebration and to indicate our sincere devotion to preserving and promoting the strong Dutch heritage of this area."

"And now...the moment you have all been patiently awaiting—the introduction of our very special guests."

"Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands, third daughter of Princess Juliana and Prince Bernhard, was born in Ottawa, Canada during World War II. The site of her birth was placed outside the jurisdiction of Canadian law so that her nationality would be exclusively Dutch. Those of you familiar with Dutch history will recall that Princess Margriet's mother, Juliana, went on to become



Queen of the Netherlands from 1948 until 1980."

"Princess Margriet first set foot on Dutch soil in August of 1945. She received her primary and secondary education in the Netherlands and completed her university entrance exams in 1961. She studied one year at the University of Montpellier before entering the Faculty of Law at Leiden University where she studied constitutional law, elementary jurisprudence, and Roman law."

"While in Leiden, Princess Margriet met a handsome young man named Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven. The couple announced their engagement in March of 1965 and were married in the Hague in January of 1967. The royal couple have four sons ranging from twenty-two to twenty-nine years old. Far more detailed information regarding the couple is included on this event's printed program..."

"Princess Margriet represents her sister, Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands, on many official occasions at events around the world. We are very pleased and honored that Princess Margriet and Mr. Van Vollenhoven have included a stop in Cedar Grove in their very busy schedule."

"At this time Diana Nett will proceed with the presentation of gifts from several local groups."

[Richard Dykstra leaves the podium and Diana Nett approaches]

**Diana Nett**

"Would the presenters please approach the stage."

"Representing the Village of Oostburg, Mr. Pete Zurmond—The Village of Oostburg is very pleased to present Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet with a painting by local artist Ed Wynveen. The Village of Oostburg also takes this opportunity to express its gratitude and heartfelt thanks to the Netherlands for the heritage of values, beliefs, and attitudes that has been sent down through the generations, from your country to ours—quali-

ties that contribute so much to making this a wonderful place to live and raise a family. Again, our sincere thanks."

"Representing the Phoenix Sesquicentennial Committee, Mrs. Ione Heinen—The Phoenix Sesquicentennial Committee is very pleased to present Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet with two books relating the story of the Phoenix, a propeller ship that burned and sank off Sheboygan's shore in November of 1847. Of the more than 175 Dutch immigrants aboard the Phoenix, just twenty-four survived. Fifteen survivors chose to establish their roots in the Gibbsville and Cedar Grove areas. Hundreds of their descendants now live in this area. One girl, Carmen Ver Velde, has the distinction of having had nine of her ancestors aboard the ship. The Phoenix Sesquicentennial Committee extends a warm welcome to Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet and Mr. Van Vollenhoven, and expresses its gratitude to the couple for including this area in their itinerary."

"Representing the Village of Cedar Grove, Mr. Erwin Claussen



Erwin Claussen and Leona Theune with the Royal Couple During  
Presentation of Gifts on Behalf of the Village of Cedar Grove.  
(Photo Courtesy Bill Schanen IV, the *Ozaukee Press*)

and Mrs. Leona Theune—The Village of Cedar Grove, in its sesquicentennial year, is very pleased and honored to present Her

## Chapter 17

Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands with a commemorative blanket that displays a variety of prominent buildings from different eras of Cedar Grove's history. Appropriately, the blanket design includes De Visch Windmill, a symbol of our heritage, in the center, with Cedar Grove's four churches as the village's cornerstones."

"The Village of Cedar Grove is also very pleased and honored to present Her Royal Highness with a recently-published book that details the 150-year history of this village. The book represents a community-wide effort that exemplifies the devotion and dedication of village residents to maintaining and promoting the strong Dutch heritage of this area."

[Diana Nett leaves the podium and Princess Margriet approaches]



Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet as She Addresses the Crowd.  
(Photo Courtesy Bill Schanen IV, the *Ozaukee Press*)

**Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands**

"Thank you Mr. Dykstra for your kind words of welcome. My husband and I are very happy to be here with you representing the Netherlands at the occasion of your celebration. I would like to thank all of you for the wonderful gifts you presented us with. We will take them home as a lasting souvenir of our visit."

"I admit I had a glimpse of your book on Cedar Grove, and was struck by the many familiar names I came across there; names like Arentsen, Beernink, DePagter, Kleinhesselink, DeKoning, Lammers, and Wieberdink to name a few. By making sure that we see and hear these names all around us you have certainly seen to it that we can easily feel at home here."

"We were deeply impressed by the number of those of your community who have contributed to the liberation of Europe [during World War II]. Some even gave their lives for our freedom. We will not forget their courage and dedication."

"The main purpose of our visit, of course, is the 150th anniversary of your village. A 150th anniversary is indeed a worthy cause to celebrate, and we would like to convey our congratulations on this happy occasion."

"Here today we realize how vibrant this community is. The expectations of the immigrants that came to America, and especially to this place 150 years ago, indeed have been surpassed. The pioneering spirit of the first immigrants clearly survived the generations. It was inherited by the present inhabitants of Cedar Grove who made their town a very dear corner of the United States."

"My husband and I are happy to have this opportunity today to experience personally how strong our common heritage is. A celebration like this invites us to look back in history where often we can find guidance for the future. This is, I think, also true today. The early settlers did the groundwork as you guide Cedar Grove into the next century-and-a-half. They can still be

your example and your inspiration... I wish you a wonderful sesquicentennial celebration."

[Standing Ovation for Princess Margriet and Mr. Van Vollenhoven]

[Princess Margriet leaves the podium and Richard Dykstra returns]

**Richard Dykstra**

"We want to express our sincere gratitude to Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands, her husband Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven, the Dutch Consulate in Chicago, and the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C. for helping make this celebration of our heritage so special."

"We also want to express our thanks to Mr. Harry Maier of St. Norbert College in De Pere, the combined Cedar Grove-Belgium, Oostburg, and Sheboygan County Christian High School bands, the Cedar Grove Village Employees, and all of the volunteers who worked so hard to help prepare for this event... "

"Thank You"

[Combined bands play "On Wisconsin"]

[Royal Party and Luncheon Guests Exit Park for DeZwaan Restaurant]

**The Luncheon**

When the program in the park concluded, Princess Margriet, Mr. Van Vollenhoven, the Royal Couple's entourage, program participants, and other luncheon guests took a short, pleasant walk to DeZwaan Restaurant along Main Street. DeZwaan's dining room was beautifully decorated for the very special event, and the restaurant staff was ready to serve. Seating was arranged such that one or more members of the Royal Couple's entourage would be located at each table. This helped promote lively, stimulating conversations.

What do you serve a princess? One good response would be "anything she wants." Another logical response is "anything she didn't have over the past several days while visiting other communities."

In an effort to assure that the Royal Couple and their entourage



The Royal Couple and Other Program Participants as They Exit  
the Park for DeZwaan Restaurant.  
(Photo Courtesy Bill Schanen IV, the *Ozaukee Press*)

would not be served the same meal as the night before, Diana Nett spoke with Harry Maier from St. Norbert College in DePere, where Princess Margriet and her husband would be dining the night before traveling to Cedar Grove. The Royal Visit Committee then went to DeZwaan Restaurant and met with head chef Larry Lenz, who provided several optional menus for presentation to the Royal Couple's advance team. The advance team subsequently approved all of the options presented and the Royal

Visit Committee chose a main course of bacon-wrapped chicken breast with orange hollandaise sauce served over wild rice. For local trivia buffs, the luncheon also included a fruit cup, fresh rolls from Dutch Crust Bakery, tarragon green beans, and Dutch Apple Spice Cake for dessert. A white wine was also available for those who were interested. The October 9, 1997 edition of the *Ozaukee Press* contained a feature article about the Royal Luncheon, including recipes for several of the items served at the event.

One of the most difficult problems encountered in the planning of the Royal Visit was the selection of guests for the noon luncheon. With limited seating available it was impossible to include the hundreds, possibly thousands, of people who have contributed so much to the preservation of the Dutch heritage throughout Sheboygan County. Eventually, the Royal Visit Committee decided that in most instances it would make a given number of invitations available to governmental bodies and service organizations and let each of those groups choose the guests who would represent them. Luncheon guests included:

Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet of the Netherlands; Mr. Pieter van Vollenhoven; Hon. Gilbert H.A. Monod de Froideville, Consul General of the Netherlands in Chicago; Mrs. Nan Monod de Froideville; Ms. Madelien de Planque, representing the Royal Netherlands Embassy in Washington D.C.; Mrs. Nolly Martens, private secretary to Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet; Mrs. Nicky Ruijgrok, aide-de-camp to Her Majesty Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands; Ms. H. Witteveen, chamberlain; Mr. Aad Meijer, project leader ; Mr. Kees van der Spek, Mr. Bart Kuijpers and Mr. Jan Kunst, security officers.

Representing the Village of Cedar Grove—Village President Erwin Claussen, Joe Wisse, Roger Sandee, Dean Voskuil, and Gene Jentink; Representing the Holland Guild Gezelschap—Ken Soerens, Joanne Voskuil, Karen Otte, Julie Keller, Jack Smies, LaMont Risseeuw, and Wesley Veldhorst; Representing Het Museum—Winson Graven, Carl DuMez, LeRoy Winklehorst, Margaret Voskuil, Bob Meinen, and Norrie Meinen; Representing the Royal Visit Committee—Diana Nett, Hubert Nett, Richard Dykstra, Linda Dykstra, Jordan Dykstra, and





Rose Duenk, Village President Erwin Claussen and Winson Graven with  
Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet at DeZwaan Restaurant.  
(Photo Courtesy Bill Schanen IV, the *Ozaukee Press*)

Leona Theune; Representing the Cedar Grove Sesquicentennial Committee–Jane Herzog, Carolyn Heinen, Pat Premo, and Joan Lenz; Representing the Village of Oostburg–Pete Zurmond, Ron Joosse, Henry Kruis, and Mary Lou DuMez; Representing the Township of Holland–Allan Claerbaut; Representing the Community at Large–James Dykstra, Ralph DeSmidt, Shirl DeSmidt, Con Otte, and Nancy Otte; Representing the Phoenix Sesquicentennial Committee–Mary Risseeuw, Ione Heinen, Ron Heinen, Marv Duenk, Rose Duenk, Marjorie Mulder, Norman Mulder, Mildred Wieberdink, Darlene Navis, and Gladys Wisse; Representing the Sheboygan County Board–William Jens and Roger TeStroete; Representing the Sheboygan County Historical Research Center–Rose Rumpff; Representing St. Norbert College–Harry Maier.

All too soon it was time for the honored guests to move on to their next destination for sesquicentennial celebrations in Holland and Zeeland, Michigan. As the Otte Motor Coach left en route to the Sheboygan County Airport, luncheon guests, restau-

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rant staff, and area residents lined the streets of Cedar Grove waving good-bye, wishing Godspeed to their newfound friends. Long after the bus departed, people continued to visit along the street, discussing the events of the very historic day and sharing individual experiences in their brushes with royalty. The Village of Cedar Grove and all of the Dutch in Sheboygan County had indeed been honored this day.



Her Royal Highness Princess Margriet Talks Briefly with  
Hon. Gilbert H.A. Monod de Froideville  
Shortly Before Leaving the Sheboygan County Airport for Holland, Michigan.

## --Chapter Eighteen--

### Old News

**E***ditor's Note: For many years, it was a common practice for city newspapers to have correspondents provide news items from surrounding villages and townships. The practice attracted rural readers, which helped improve newspaper circulation and increase profits. The following news items, which were originally published in Sheboygan newspapers during the late-1800s and early-1900s, provide insight into what life was like at that time. The selected news items also make for some very interesting reading.*

#### **West Cedar Grove – February 1888:**

*A party was held last week Thursday night at the residence of Mr. John and Mr. Gerrit Prinsen. Dancing was indulged in until a late hour and a good time was had. Music by Best and Smith.*

*Mr. Charles H. DeSmith and daughter Sarah went to Oostburg last Thursday, and the roads were in such bad condition that on their way home they had a tip-over but no damage was done.*

*A young man from Lima was straying out in this neighborhood last week with a span of young mules. In the daytime he took his friend out sleighing, while in the evening the poor animals had to find their resting place in a neighbor's hen-house.*

#### **West Cedar Grove – April 1888:**

*Born to Mr. and Mrs. Jake Dana, Friday March 28, a son.*

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*Mr. Wm. Hopeman will open his cheese factory Monday April 16.  
Josie Rauwerdink cheese maker.*

*It rained here last Thursday and Friday.*

### **West Cedar Grove – June 1888:**

*A wedding is expected soon.*

*Mr. John DeBruine has bought a self binder.*

*Willie Vruink has purchased a fine carriage. Now girls who will  
have the first ride.*

*We are glad to hear our Cedar Grove correspondent answer his  
own question in his items two weeks ago.*

*Messrs John and Gerrit Prinsen are making quite an improve-  
ment to their farm by tearing down the old rail fence and putting  
up a wire fence.*

### **Cedar Grove Items – December 1891:**

*Mr. A. H. Schiereck proposes, it is said, to give a Christmas  
Dance and Oyster Supper.*

### **West Cedar Grove – December 1900:**

*Misses Mary and Lizzie Meylink and Miss Jeannette Van Zanten  
called on Miss Clara Dana last Friday afternoon.*

*The Town Board of Holland met at J. E. Dana's our Town Clerk's  
office last Tuesday.*

### **Cedar Grove Items – February 1893:**

*Mr. A. H. Schiereck has been hauling ice the last week.*

*A man (evidently a lunatic) was roaming on our streets Saturday*

*and Sunday frightening people and raising a disturbance.*

*The masquerade ball was largely attended.*

*Peter DeSmidt shot one of his hounds while out hunting, not by accident but because the dog was worthless.*

*Mr. A. H. Schiereck met with a painful accident while handling ice. A cake fell on his foot smashing it badly.*

### **Cedar Grove – March 1899:**

*Miss Mertie McIntyre, one of our north side school teachers, and Elmer Ruslink spent last Saturday evening with Mr. and Mrs. Serier.*

*The C&NW Ry Co. want all the encroachments on their grounds vacated as soon as possible. We understand some small buildings and fences will have to be moved. Mr. H. Meengs also received notice from this station to remove his side walk that was on the company's ground and Mr. Meengs has complied with their request.*

*Mr. G. Grotenhuis put a new cistern into his residence and is now waiting for rain.*

*Mr. Ben Grave, the coachman for Garret Grotenhuis, was kept busy this week to bring and haul the many agents to different parts of this county.*

*Mrs. C. Walvoord is reported to be on the sick list this week.*

### **West Cedar Grove – July 1901:**

*E. Dana took a trip to Oostburg Saturday.*

*Mr. A. J. Greupink has the carpenters this week.*

*Mr. A. J. Kreun took a trip to the Chair City Saturday.*

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*Mr. J. W. Rauwerdink lost a horse this week.*

*Miss Delia TerBesste is on the sick list*

*Mr. Will Hyink spent Sunday at home*

*Mr. J. B. Wynveen Jr. is reshingling his barn this week.*

*Mr. and Mrs. J. D. Walvoord visited relatives in Gibbsville one day the past week.*

*Mr. John TenPas took a trip to Hingham Wednesday.*

### **West Cedar Grove – September 1907:**

*Herman Hopeman bought a colt of Martin De Ruyter for \$50.*

### **Cedar Grove – April 1911:**

*Baseball fans will be given their first treat on Saturday afternoon when the Academy Nine and the Cedar Grove team will cross bats on the Academy grounds.*

*Ray Lubach while playing ball on the academy grounds last Friday was lulled to sleep for a few seconds on third base as a result of his cranium coming in contact with the hard side of a base ball. The injury was not very serious and the victim is again in condition to cover third sack.*

*The new 300 pound fire bell for the local fire department will arrive here this week. The bell will be placed in the tower of the village hall and being a 30-Inch Blymer can be heard in all parts of the village.*

### **Cedar Grove – December 1911:**

*Remember the dance at the village hall Monday evening, January 1st. Music will be furnished by Gabler's Harp Orchestra. The Cedar Grove Amusement Club requests your presence at the affair.*

**West Cedar Grove – May 1912:**

*H. Tempas had a telephone put in his residence last week.*

**Cedar Grove – April 1914:**

*The following ticket was elected to this village:*

*President – G. E. Zimmerman*

*Treasure – E. Soerens*

*Supervisor – H. Ruslink*

*Trustees – Peter, Henry Weavers, and J. L. Ramaker*

*Town went dry by 23 votes.*

*The Ladies Bethsaida Sewing Circle will have their Program on April 15 given by John Otten an impersonator from Carroll College.*

*Henry Koeppel is under quarantine on account of his son Donald being sick with scarlet fever. His brother Robert Koeppel is attending to the business.*

*Mr. G. Grotenhuis and daughter Olive visited Oostburg Saturday.*

*What is Jack going to do when the town goes dry?*

**Cedar Grove – Dates Unknown:**

*Matt DeMaster was unable to attend to his duties at the store a few days the past week on account of rheumatism.*

*Born to Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Droppers a baby girl.*

*Lester Ramaker spent several days here at the home of his parents Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Ramaker.*



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*Peter Theune has the misfortune to lose a valuable horse this week.*

*Garret Wissink is ill with lung fever.*

*Mr. Jacoby is putting up his supply of ice.*

*Misses Tessie and Annie Braun attended the Basket Ball game on Christmas afternoon.*

*Miss Florence TenDollen has resigned her position in the post office. Miss Rhina Luback will fill her position.*

*The Christmas programs at both the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches were well rendered. A large crowd attended and in every way the entertainments were a success.*

*The Christian Endeavor Society held their annual business meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. J. Renskers on Tuesday evening.*

*The hardware store of Ben Mentink was entered by some unknown persons Sunday night and six dollars in cash was taken ... A card with "thank you" written on it was found on the counter.*

*A daring robbery took place at the local cannery last Monday when thieves made their escape with eight cases of peas.*

*The dedication of the village hall will take place Thursday February 4th when the presentation of "Ten Nights in a Bar Room" will be given, a temperance drama in five acts.*

*Albert Weiler found a \$10 gold piece Tuesday while digging a sewer. Albert now says that it pays to do hard, honest labor. Were it not for the fact that the officers stopped him he would still be digging.*

## -Chapter Nineteen- Historical Update [1997 – 2014]

### **General**

**S**ince 1997, when the first edition of this text was published, the Village of Cedar Grove has seen continuous growth. In 1997, signs to the entrance of the village showed a population of 1,577 -- which was based on the official 1990 census. By 2010, the village's population had grown to more than 2,100 – an increase of nearly forty percent. Primary areas of growth occurred on the north and south ends of the village through the completion of Hickory Heights subdivision, Navis Rolling Meadows subdivision and Grove Meadows subdivision.

Grove Meadows subdivision was made possible when the Village of Cedar Grove purchased 93 acres of farm land from the Grotenhuis Brothers on the south end of the village. The village sold 76 acres to developers for the construction of single-family homes and condominiums, while converting seventeen acres to a park-like setting with three ponds, a soccer field and flood-control plain.

Since 1997, the village has also seen the construction of a new 300,000-gallon water tower (which is five times larger than the tower it replaced), the completion of the paved Interurban Bike Trail, and the addition of new Main Street lighting. The Interurban Bike Trail is located on a right-of-way previously used by an electric railway that stretched from Sheboygan to Milwaukee in the early-1900s.

### **Schools**

Over the past two decades, the growth of the Cedar Grove-Belgium School District has outpaced the growth of the village. In the early 1990s, there were 205 students in the high school and there were 713 students in Grades K-12. Today, there are 339 students in the high school and 1,125 students in Grades 4K-12. The reasons for the large increase in enrollment include a substantial growth in the Village of Cedar Grove, an even greater growth in the Village of Belgium, and the implementation of Wisconsin's open-enrollment legislation, which allows students from other school districts to attend school in any district they wish.

The rapid growth of the Cedar Grove-Belgium School System has resulted in numerous building projects being completed over the past fifteen years. In 1999, a new two-story 108,000 square-foot high school (with gymnasium having a seating capacity of 1,276) was completed on the north end of Second Street. In that same year, the school system's auditorium was remodeled to increase total seating capacity to nearly 550.

In 2000 an athletic complex with a track, football field and baseball diamond was completed on property just east of the new high school. The football complex boasts a seating capacity of more than 1,400.

In 2012, classrooms with 6,700 square-feet of space were added to the high school to provide higher-level technical-education and art courses. In that same year, the middle school and elementary school were increased in size by a combined 3,600 square-feet.

It is obvious that residents of the Cedar Grove-Belgium Area School District take great pride in the education their students receive.

### **Churches**

First Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Cedar Grove: Over the past two decades, the congregation has switched its denominational affiliation from Presbyterian to Evangelical Presbyterian. The congregation celebrated its 150th anniversary in 2003. Since

1997, Rev. Stephen Pike, Rev. David Van Dixhorn and Rev. Justin Sembler have served as church pastors.

First Reformed Church of Cedar Grove: Since the first edition of this text was published, First Reformed Church has seen the construction of Rosemary Hall (In loving memory of Rosemary Soerens Jones) with full kitchen, the addition of space for youth programs, the operation of *Little Shepherds Inn Child Care Center*, the beginning of a contemporary service called *The Alternative* and the celebration of the congregation's 100th anniversary. Rev. Kent Vant Hul, presently serves as lead-pastor for the congregation.

Calvary Orthodox Presbyterian Church: Since 1997, Rev. Donald Ritsman, Dr. Richard Edwards and Rev. Ron Beabout have served as pastors for the congregation. Calvary Church celebrated its 75th anniversary in 2011.

Faith Reformed Church: In 2009, Faith Reformed Church completed an addition that doubled the church's usable space. The addition included a Great Room, library, nursery, kitchen and youth classrooms. Since 1997, Rev. Raymond "Van" Rathbun, Rev. Earl Slotman and Rev. Ron Sanford have served as lead-pastors for the congregation. Faith Reformed Church, which is the youngest church in the Village of Cedar Grove, will be celebrating its 50th anniversary in the summer of 2014.

### **Post Office**

In 1998, Phil Buchman became the village's 20th postmaster, a position he holds to this day. Mr. Buchman's sixteen years as postmaster is the longest continuous term anyone has ever served in that position.

### **Library**

Diana Nett, who served as Director of the Cedar Grove Public Library from 1978 through 2004, saw tremendous growth in the facility throughout that time. Since Diana's retirement, Connie Acker (2004-2008) and Nicole Lynaugh (2008-present) have served as library director.

### **Health Care**

Dr. Brian De Master and Physician's Assistant Allison Soerens presently provide primary health-care services through the Cedar Grove branch of the Aurora Sheboygan Clinic. Additional clinic staff include a registered nurse, three medical assistants, an X-ray/Lab technician and a receptionist. Aurora Pharmacy continues its operation in a portion of the clinic building.

### **Fire Department**

In 2011, the Village of Cedar Grove Volunteer Fire Department celebrated its 100th anniversary with a community-wide picnic. The fire department is presently comprised of 35 members, with Greg Navis serving as Fire Chief. As of May 2014, the department has six fire trucks, a first-responder vehicle, a rescue boat, and an all-terrain vehicle.

### **Conservation Club**

Since 1997, Sauk Trail Conservation Club has purchased adjacent land which more than doubles the group's property holdings. This expansion provided room for three new trap-shooting fields and room for a new, much larger clubhouse to use for expanded trap leagues and an annual hunter safety course. In 2014, eighty students from the Cedar Grove-Belgium and Oostburg Area School Districts became part of a trap team that calls Sauk Trail Conservation Club its home.

### **Zip-Code-Day**

In May 2013, the Village of Cedar Grove celebrated an event that can only be observed once per century. On May 30, 2013 (5-30-13) the year's date coincided with the village's zip-code (53013). This special occasion was celebrated with the distribution of free post cards that pictured area landmarks and with the creation of a special post-office cancelation stamp that was just used for that day. In addition, the Cedar Grove Library hosted an ice-cream social featuring "Sweezy Brrr" ice-cream sundaes (in honor of Sweezy Burr, the village's first post master), and more than one-hundred people enjoyed scenic bus tours hosted by village historian Richard Dykstra.

**Sweezy Brr sundae consisted of:**

- 5 oz. Vanilla Ice Cream
- 3 Tbsp of Strawberries or Chocolate Syrup
- 0 Stamp-Glue Taste
- 1 oz. Real Whipped Cream
- 3 Cherries

**Business and Industry**

*Editor's Note: Chapters Eight through Ten of this text provide a thorough history of business and industry throughout the Village of Cedar Grove's first 150 years. Information presented in this chapter provides a brief summary of significant changes that have occurred since 1997. As with the first edition of this text, primary emphasis is placed on businesses with established histories and storied pasts. Dozens of additional carpenters, building and masonry contractors, painters, engineering and management consultants, sales reps, and other self-employed individuals have contributed to the continued growth of the village as well, and their efforts are greatly appreciated.*

**Business Expansions:**

Willman Industries continues to be the largest private employer in the Village of Cedar Grove. The grey and ductile-iron foundry, which has seen significant increases in production and office space as well as significant improvements in production capacity and use of technology over the past two decades, now employs more than 120 people. Items produced by the foundry include components as small as a child's building-block to machine parts weighing as much as 40,000 pounds (20 tons).

Cedar Grove Veterinary Clinic more than doubled its available space with the completion of a large addition in 2004. The clinic now has six full-time veterinarians treating both large and small animals, and has fifteen additional staff members including veterinary technicians, technician-assistants and groomers.

National Exchange Bank and Trust moved into new facilities at a new site on South Main Street in July 2010. Jeff De Smidt continues to serve as a Vice-President for National Exchange Bank

and Trust, and serves as Manager of the local branch bank. While moving operations to a new building at a new site, National Exchange Bank brought some nostalgic items from its original facility to the new location. Framing and trim from the old brick building's teller windows now serve the same purpose in the new facility. In addition, some of the original marble from the old bank building now appears between teller windows, and a large wooden bench that once stood in the barber shop in the basement of the old bank is used to seat customers who are waiting to meet with bank personnel. The new bank building is located on property previously occupied by J. M. Bruce Foundry.

The Good As New Shop, a resale store on the northwest corner of Main Street and Wisconsin Avenue has increased its floor space, inventory and hours of operation over the past several years. Proceeds from the store are used to support Sheboygan County Christian High School.

Shear Imagination owners Randy and Lynnette Ebbers Johnson moved their business from Cedar Avenue to a new building at 120 East Union Avenue in December 2012. The new building has the Union Pacific railroad tracks just to the west and the Interurban Bike Trail just to the east. The exterior of the new hair salon and tanning studio, which resembles a late-1800s railroad depot, provides a wonderful first impression for anyone entering the village from the east. In 2013, the Johnsons donated an area of land to the village for the construction of a shelter and information center along the bike trail. As with Shear Imagination's building, the bike shelter is being constructed with a railroad theme.

### **Old Business/New Owner**

Country Grove Restaurant: The restaurant, which was owned and operated by Bruce and Barb Lukens when the first edition of this text was published, was sold to Steve Bouldin in 1999. Mr. Bouldin operated the restaurant until 2011 and then sold the business to Mary and Jason Martin. The business is presently called Mary's Country Grove Restaurant.



**AKA Mobil:** The gas station and minimart on the southwest corner of Union and Main was sold in 2000 and the name of the business was changed from Union Station to AKA Mobil. In 2003, Vijay and Theresa, the business' new owners, added a car wash and increased the number of gas pumps from four to fourteen. In 2008 expansion continued when the former De Zwaan Restaurant was razed and a new Cousins Sub restaurant was built on that site. The new restaurant includes additional office space at the rear of the building. That space is presently rented by CPay, a credit-card processing firm.

In 2000, Wells Fargo Corporation purchased Norwest Banks of Wisconsin and began to operate the businesses in their name. On June 24, 2000 the Cedar Grove branch officially opened as Wells Fargo Bank of Cedar Grove. Mai Yang presently serves as the Cedar Grove bank's manager.

**Hometown Haircuts:** In 2004, Lindsey Mentink purchased J. B. Comb and Shears barbershop from Jim Bowe and changed the name of the business to Hometown Haircuts. Lindsey continues to operate the barbershop on South Main Street to this day.

**Cedar Grove Hardware:** In 2006, Bruce and Barb Lukens purchased Cedar Grove Hardware from Glen Ten Dolle and Paul Huenink. They continue to own and operate the store to this day.

### **New Businesses**

During the late-1990s the Harmayer Family opened Krystal Creek Kennels at W2349 Amsterdam Road. The business now operates as a full-service dog boarding, grooming and training facility for all breeds – from pets to hunting dogs

**1998:** Ray Selk moved his Chicago Art Glass & Jewels business into a portion of the former Dean Foods complex along South Main Street. The business, which produced stained-glass and ornamental-glass pieces, no longer creates art-glass but continues to store inventory and sell products from that site. In 2008, Mr. Selk began using a larger portion of the former Dean Foods building to operate Cedar Grove Warehousing, a cold-storage

facility that is used to age bulk-cheese prior to packaging. In 2013, Cedar Grove Warehousing completed renovation of the former National Exchange Bank building on South Main Street to use as its corporate headquarters.

**2001:** Brothers Mark and Dale Van Ess converted a hobby into a part-time business when they started Van Ess Small Engines, a lawn and garden equipment repair shop that was housed in their parents' garage. In 2013, the business expanded significantly with the purchase of the former E & R Plumbing building at 250 North Commerce Street. A portion of the building is leased by Jason Jacoby, who operates two separate businesses at the site. The two businesses are Mobile Dustless Blasting and Jacoby Auto Body.

**2003:** Mike and Pam Deppiesse purchased buildings from Navis and De Blaey Mason Contractors on the south end of Cedar Grove along County Road LL. The couple added shop and office space to the complex and moved their business, MJ Equipment, from its previous location in Belgium to the new site. MJ Equipment deals in the sales, service and rental of construction equipment.

**2004:** In September 2004, Vicki Koepke opened Bada Bing Pizza on Main Street. Her shop, which specializes in both traditional and specialty pizzas, has a limited dining area -- most business is done through carry-out or delivery. The business, which is open Tuesday through Sunday, has baked as many as 400 pizzas on a weekend. In January 2013, Vicki opened a second shop in Fredonia.

In November 2004, a second gas station was opened at the intersection of Main Street and Union Avenue. The station, which stands on the northeast corner of the intersection, is independently owned, and has no attendants on site. At the present time, Piggly Wiggly customers can receive discounted fuel prices based on purchases made at the local store.

**2005:** Soerens Woodworking, a full-service custom-cabinet shop

was opened by Grant and Stacey Soerens in 2005. The business moved to 430 South Main Street in 2006, thus continuing a family legacy at that address. The building that Grant and Stacey moved their business to was constructed by Grant's great-grandfather, G. William Soerens, in the early 1930s and was home to a grocery store that was owned and operated by various members of the Soerens family for nearly fifty years

Studio 406, a three-chair hair salon located at 406 South Main Street, opened its doors in December 2005. The business, which is owned and operated by Pam Paape Deppiesse, is located in a wonderfully repurposed building that formerly served as a lumber-yard office, village library, variety store and adult day care.

**2006:** The first of two 20-room units of Cedar Grove Gardens was completed in 2006 on the west end of Van Altena Avenue. Each unit of Cedar Grove Gardens provides assisted-living services for as many as 22 residents. The second building was completed just one year later.

Jen Lund opened Evolution Fitness, a women's fitness center, in a building that was previously occupied by Lakeshore Cabinetry. The business continued to operate until 2010.

Becky Smies Dulmes opened the Cracked Shoe Coffee Shop in the building that previously housed the Dutch Crust Bakery. Becky operated the business until December 2012.

**2007:** Amy Schoeder converted the former Dutch Cleaners building, at the corner of Main Street and Wisconsin Avenue, into Main Street Koffee. She operated the restaurant until March 2012.

When Johnson Bus Service began provided student-transportation services for the Cedar Grove-Belgium School District, they purchased the shop and office space previously used by DeRuyter Auto Body and CG Collision. The building now serves as Johnson Bus Service's district headquarters, and CG Collision has moved its business to a facility in Belgium.

**2010:** In July 2010, Oostburg State Bank opened a branch office at a site on South Main Street. Steve Wisse presently serves as an Oostburg State Bank vice-president and Manager of the Cedar Grove branch. Oostburg State Bank's Cedar Grove office is located on a site that had previously been occupied by the local cooperative-exchange. The Cedar Grove Co-op building was razed in 2009 after the local feed mill consolidated its operations with Kettle Lakes Co-op in Random Lake.

**2014:** Oma's on Main, a Dutch-themed full-service restaurant that operates in the building previously occupied by the Cracked Shoe Coffee Shop, opened in April 2014. The restaurant opening, which fulfilled a lifelong dream of Cedar Grove native Carol Tenpas Mentink, was made possible with help and support from many of Carol's family and friends.

*Editor's Note: While not a new business, there is one additional enterprise that needs to be recognized in this text. **Standard Printing is celebrating its 100th Anniversary in 2014.** The business was located on the southwest corner of Main Street and Union Avenue during its first forty-years of operation. Then, in 1954, Marv Duenk purchased the business and moved it to its present site on North Main Street. Standard Printing has operated with the same name throughout its entire history, and there have only been four ownership changes during that time. Standard Printing, which has played an important role in the publication of both editions of this text, is presently owned and operated by Greg and Chris Narus.*