

## BITS and PIECES

By Sue Kurth



The Morgan Farm, built in 1900 left sat on a thousand or more acres and had prized hogs and cattle. Following Morgan's departure, Richard Freeman bought the home and property. Upon his departure the Freeman Home was converted into the popular Manor restaurant. For 111 years the site has seen a lot of activity, a lot of life. Today the site [right] sits vacant after demolition of the Home this summer of 2011.

**John Patrick's books** on South Beloit history and Stateline Area postcards have the potential of raising more than \$600 for Beloit Historical Society, thanks to the generosity of the author. He published two books with local appeal and sold them at the South Beloit Historical Society where he has been very involved since its beginnings. Proceeds went back to that organization. Now, he has decided to include the Beloit Historical Society on the profits, so we could also benefit. "We're all in this together. I was born in Beloit, lived in Beloit and owned property in Beloit," said Patrick, who today lives in South Beloit.

His first book was "Windows to Our Past: Beloit Area Postcards," which is suitable for use as a coffee-table book. This book began with his fascination for postcards of the region, which he began collecting 30 years ago. After his collection was stolen, he once again began collecting (even finding some on the internet he was sure were his to begin with). His new collection was bigger and better than his original. Patrick wrote narrative for each postcard, then his son, a graphic artist, helped get the book ready for publication three to four years ago. That book sells for \$20 each, with \$10 going to B.H.S.

His second book, "The Good Old Days - Growing Up in the '40s and '50s," was published last year. In this book, Patrick tells the story of his growing-up years, where he hung out and the crazy things he did. He talks about ice skating at Lincoln Junior High's flooded field, creating May baskets, shooting marbles and more. Those books sell for \$10 each, \$5 of which goes to the Society.

Why not treat yourself to an enjoyable read or buy some as gifts for others who enjoy local history, and help out B.H.S. at the same time?



**"We're all in this together."**

*John Patrick*



**Field Park**

**Field Park**, which sits at the corner of Bluff St. and West Grand Ave., was once the location of the third home owned by Beloit pioneer Alfred Lorenzo Field. His wife, Elizabeth, called it "Bird's Nest Cottage." The property where the old YWCA building sits today was also Field's property. (See John Hackett, below, for more information on Field Park).

Field was a very active and respected member of Beloit society. He was part of the New England Emigrating Company, arriving here in 1837 in charge of a four-ox team pulling barrels of food and tools which the earlier residents were happy to receive. He soon married Elizabeth Lusk out east and brought her home to Beloit. Elizabeth's brother, James Lusk, apparently followed because both a store and mill were owned by the firm of Field and Lusk. The mill was called Brook's Mill, named after the miller who worked there. (See more about Brook's Mill inside).

When Field became Beloit's third postmaster, he ran the post office from a corner of his store which was located either at the corner of State and Grand (site of today's Strong Building) or State and St. Paul. A true builder of Beloit, he joined the Civil War at age 55, along with a son. He had been a land speculator and owned 31 lots in Beloit. He purchased 400 acres in what is now Turtle Township and 480 in Beloit Township. He died at age 59, in 1868, after slipping while trying to board a moving train.

*Continued inside*

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The Vision of the Beloit Historical Society is to make history a focal point of community pride and to serve as a constant reminder to the community of its great and diverse heritage.  
Visit our web site at [beloithistoricalociety.com](http://beloithistoricalociety.com)

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## Beloit Historical Society

Founded 1910

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Paul Kerr, Dwight Alton,  
and Dick Gerhard; layout  
by Jen Scott.

Board meetings are the  
third Thursday of every  
month at 4 p.m. and are  
held at Lincoln Center, 845  
Hackett Street.

The Newsletter, Conflu-  
ence, is published quarterly  
for the membership of the  
Beloit Historical Society to  
inform readers of Society  
activities as well as educate  
them on the history of Beloit.  
The Beloit Historical Society  
manages two sites, Lincoln  
Center Museum with main  
offices at 845 Hackett St. and  
Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead,  
2149 St. Lawrence Ave. For fur-  
ther information please call (608)  
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Or see our web site at  
[beloithistoricalsociety.com](http://beloithistoricalsociety.com).

## GETTING TO KNOW YOUR VOLUNTEERS: JUDY HALME NICHOLS



Genealogy is a favorite area of study for me. It's like a giant puzzle needing to be solved. It not only helps me to realize the events and people who shaped me, but has taught me a lot about history. I've learned about the local areas of my ancestors, about the national scene at the time, migration patterns and social customs. I was motivated by what my uncle told me in the mid 1960's that my ancestral family, at one time, owned a castle in England. So with the motivation of discovering my family ties to England and the castle, I started my genealogical quest and along the way discovered British and German ancestors, cousins and yes, the castle, where the family worked.

My work at the Beloit Historical Society is in line with my love of genealogy and history: I do family research and Beloit city research, both of which are enlightening and educational, good lessons that better help me appreciate the city and its people. I volunteer at the Society working in the office on

Tuesdays and Fridays from noon-4 p.m. and have been involved with the place for nearly three years. Stop in and say "hi" sometime. I'd be glad to show you around.

### LEAVE YOU WITH A FAVORITE QUOTE OF MINE:

*"Life is not a journey to the grave with the intention of arriving safely in a pretty and well preserved body, but rather to skid in broadside, thoroughly worn out, and proclaiming 'Wow, what a ride!'"*

## Happenings

We have 'extra' **Beloiter yearbooks** spanning the years from 1917 through 1986 for purchase. **City Directories** from 1897 through 1989 are also available for sale. If any members are interested in purchasing a copy, the list of available years are listed on [www.beloithistoricalsociety.com](http://www.beloithistoricalsociety.com). Each book is \$25 and shipping is \$5.

We also have DVDs for sale. Jimmy and Cheryl Caldwell created a documentary entitled **Through Their Eyes: the History of African Americans in Beloit 1836-1970**. The

documentary is informative, interesting, embellished with interviews, photographs and accompanying music. These DVDs of poignant stories and rich slices of Beloit history sell for \$20 each, \$3 for shipping. The Society and the Back-to-Beloit Scholarship Fund split the proceeds.

Two regular, seasonal events here at

the Society drew considerable interest: **Heritage Days** (11 September) and the **City Hall of Fame** (18 September). The first is a celebration of Beloit's heritage and we do this along with numerous participants in the community. For us the celebration was marked at both Hanchett-Bartlett Homestead and Lincoln Center with open houses. At Lincoln Center we showed off a few new exhibits in the front lobby, the Arthur Missner Veterans Room and the E.L. Ted Perring Sports Hall of Fame. At the City Hall of Fame event the following week, we inducted into the Hall five individuals whose volunteer contributions made Beloit a better place. They are: Edwin C. Dahlberg, Philip J. Johnson, Joseph P. Kobylka, Elbert H. Neese, Jr. and Robert H. Solem.

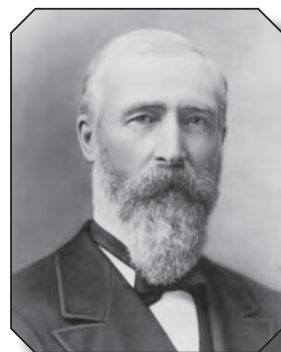
Back on the 4th of August the Historical Society had one of its most successful **Sports Hall of Fame** events in a decade. The evening and guest speaker Mike Lucas attracted a polite, sociable crowd of 135 individuals. Five people and the 1991 State Champion Track Team were inducted into the Hall. The five people are Katie Connelly, Bill Goetzke, Kris Pearson, Jeff Stovall and Gene Winger.



E.L. TED PERRING SPORTS HALL OF FAME

Continued from front

**Brook's Mill** was built about 1843 at the corner of Wisconsin Avenue and East Grand Avenue by Alfred Field and James Lusk, but was operated by DeLorma Brooks. The feed mill produced quantities of cracked grain for livestock. In 1916 it was demolished at the city's request so that East Grand could be "straightened."



John Hackett

**John Hackett** is memorialized with a concrete fountain which sits at Field Park. The fountain was created to honor his contributions to this community. At one time the fountain sat in the center of what is now the Fourth Street and W. Grand Avenue intersection, and served to water horses.

The son-in-law of Beloit's founder Caleb Blodgett, Hackett was Beloit's first postmaster, built a flour mill and held interests in two Beloit paper mills. He represented Beloit in the State Constitutional Assembly and later was elected an assemblyman. He also was mayor of Beloit and had both a school and a street named in his honor.



Brook's Mill

**Yost Park**, now known to many as Burrwood Park, is situated in the Town of Beloit along the Rock River. Today it is a residential area, but many people may recall that in the early days of the 20th century, Yost Park was a popular place for picnics, dances, reunions and baseball games. The Book of Beloit indicates that there was once a Native American Village at the Yost Park site, which even included a mound.



Yost Park

There was once a boat livery near the Portland Avenue Bridge, so many college students, families and young couples paddled to Big Hill or Yost Park for picnics. Yost Store, located in the park, served ice cream treats, lunches and bottles of pop for 5 cents. The Yost family still farmed on a small scale nearby, but with the advent of the Rockford and Interurban railway to provide transportation, Yost Park's pasture land soon became a baseball park surrounded by a wood fence with grandstand and bleachers. One year the Chicago Cubs and White Sox played each other at the Yost diamond. Easier transportation also brought more people to the park by car and trolley for various entertainment features.

### Stelter Donor Insight Report

New research reveals how your beloved ones really feel about sharing a piece of their inheritance with a nonprofit. Of the adults surveyed, 72% feel it's reasonable for you to designate 5-10% to charity. Please keep that in mind when you are making your plans for the future. Even a small percentage can make a significant impact at our organization.

## See the Trees!

This December the Hanchett-Bartlett Committee plans another **Christmas Tree Event**. This affair is scheduled for the 2nd & 3rd of December 2011. On the 2nd (a Friday) the Homestead will be open to the public from 4-8 p.m. and on the 3rd open from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Refreshments will be served. We will keep you posted as to further details about this event but it is free and open to the public.