

Fitchburg Historical Society

FEB
1992



McCoy House



Fox Hall



Kern House

FEBRUARY ANNUAL MEETING

Yes, if it's February, it must be annual meeting time again! This year we have scheduled the event for Sunday, February 16 at 1:30 p.m. in the Fitchburg Room (upstairs) at the Community Center, 5510 East Lacy Road.

In the last newsletter it was reported that Fitchburg has added our fourth entry to the National Register of Historic Places, that being the Wisconsin Industrial School for Girls on Highway "M", (now Oakhill Correctional Institute). In honor of our latest listing, the Board of Directors felt it was appropriate to devote the annual meeting to familiarizing our membership with the facility and providing information on its historical significance.

To that end, we have invited Tricia Canaday from the State Historical Society, as well as current Oakhill warden, Catherine Farrey, to provide their insights on the facility. Ms. Canaday prepared the application that successfully placed the Girl's School on the National Register. Her presentation will consist of slides and historical information about the site. Warden Farrey will provide her observations concerning the present day use of the site.

The Jan./Feb. 1992 issue of the State Historical Society's Wisconsin Preservation newsletter provides a brief overview of the new listing. The Wisconsin Industrial School for Girls was built in 1932 and its rural location was thought to offer a healthful environment away from the evils of the city. The historical designation includes 13 buildings, including a school, maintenance buildings, and ten cottages.

In addition to our guest speakers, we will hold our annual business meeting which includes elections to the Board of Directors and renewal of memberships. Special refreshments are planned as well. Please plan to attend Sunday, February 16.



Wisconsin
Industrial School
for Girls
Fitchburg

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

All Fitchburg Historical Society memberships expire at each year's annual meeting. Enclosed with this newsletter you will find a membership form which we urge you to complete and bring to the annual meeting. Additional forms and membership cards will be available at the February 16 meeting.

If you are unable to attend the annual meeting, please mail your renewal dues to our current treasurer, Ellen Green, 5449 Irish Lane, Madison, WI 53711. For single and family memberships, our dues remain the same---\$5.00 and \$10.00 respectively. In an effort to encourage more Fitchburg businesses to participate in the Historical Society, the Board of Directors voted to lower business memberships from \$50.00 to \$25.00.

If there are any address changes, please enclose a short note to Ellen so we can make the necessary changes in our files and future directories.

We sincerely hope we have provided you with programs or information that make your Historical Society membership worthwhile. Your continued involvement is very important to the continued growth of the Society. If you have suggestions or special programs that you would like to see us present, please let us know at renewal time.

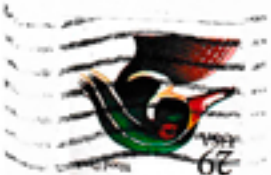


ELECTIONS PLANNED AT ANNUAL MEETING

The terms of the following Board of Directors expire in February: Eric Amle, Connie Darling, Winnie Lacy and Patricia Delker.

They have graciously indicated their interest in continuing on the Board for another three year term, and elections will be part of the business meeting at the February annual meeting.





FITCHBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY
2421 West Hill Dr.
Fitchburg, WI 53711



DID YOU KNOW?

The last remaining original building from the Village of Syene (in Fitchburg) has been moved with the intention of assuring its preservation. Marc Jones reports that he recently completed moving the aging barn from its site next to the railroad tracks along Syene Road to his farm property across the road from the original site.

The Jones' research indicates that the barn, though undergoing various renovations over the years, was built sometime around the establishment of the railroad adjacent to it---about 1864.

Marc found more information about the Syene area in City and Places in Dane County and research done by Ken Reigle and John Gruber for the Antique Rail Assoc. Syene was first settled in 1845. There appears to be no reference to why the name "Syene" was chosen, although Marc has learned that there is some Biblical significance to the name; it means "remoteness."

The train station at the site was built in 1864 and remained in operation until 1926 with the last stationmaster being Vern Sykes. The Sykes', Nellie and Vern, were probably the last to use the barn as a cow and horse barn; it has been used most recently as a truck garage.

During the period in which Syene flourished, it boasted a grocery store, a creamery, a stockyard, blacksmith shop, boarding house, post office and train station.

Marc anticipates that renovation will be a lengthy process, but plans to begin with footings and a foundation in the spring.

SUGGESTIONS ARE ENCOURAGED

Not only are suggestions encouraged, they will also be solicited at the upcoming annual meeting. Between now and February 16 we hope you will give some thought to what you would like to see the Historical Society undertake or accomplish.

The Board of Directors will be preparing a brief survey which will be distributed at the annual meeting. We will be asking you what programs you would like to see, what programs you have enjoyed, and any suggestions for appropriate long-term projects.

We would like to expand the newsletter to provide a forum for our members' contributions. Please consider providing an anecdote, a brief story, or your written memories of Fitchburg history for future newsletters.

We also hope to involve our members in assisting with our exhibit case in the Community Center. Do you have some ideas about historical displays, or perhaps an interesting collection of family memorabilia you would be willing to share?

There are so many untapped resources in our community. The Board of Directors knows our members have vibrant ideas just awaiting exploration. We want to hear from you on Sunday, February 16...we'll provide the pencils!!

