

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

June 2007

Our society has taken on a project of improving our cemetery. There are graves where there obviously are no relatives living to take care of them. We have started sealing monuments, setting markers straight, etc. So far some of our expenses are for cement and sealant. The village isn't able to help us financially, due to the fact that this cemetery is privately owned. The cemetery board doesn't have any extra funds. We would appreciate any donations to help us in this project.

Earl Harmon (Mickey) Williams passed away on April 8, 2007. He was 86.

On April 15 twelve of our members went on our spring trip. We ate at the Flame Restaurant in Rockford and then received an excellent tour of Memorial Hall by Terry Dyer. They have many interesting artifacts. President Theodore Roosevelt dedicated this building on June 3, 1903. It took eighteen months to complete at a cost of approximately \$59,150. Mr. Dryer will eventually write a book on the history of Memorial Hall. Also, he is currently writing a book on Camp Grant during W. W. 1 and W. W. 2.

On May 4th and 5th we had a bake sale at our museum. Cherry Valley had village-wide rummage sales those days. We made a profit of \$171.21. Many delicious deserts were donated. Many thanks to everyone who baked and helped at our sale.

Ray Lee's Hardware Circa 1950 submitted by John Larson. "The business was started by Ray's father, Tom Lee, who was originally in the grocery business. For many years Ray also ran the lumber yard and sold furnaces and pumps. The hardware store had a tin shop built on the back which burned in 1927 along with three grocery stores.

When you walked through the door, you stepped back in time forty years. The wooden floor was worn by ninety years of use to the point that the knots protruded 3/8" above the softer parts of the boards. The counter on the west side of the store had built-in nail bins under it, and a fancy rotating screw cabinet with many sides and many drawers for different sizes of screws. The cash register was made mostly of wood. You could buy almost any kind of tool, nails, screws, hinges, stove pipes and parts, and glass (cut to size).

For many years Ray employed Tom Healey and Will Brown to install furnaces, fix plumbing and stoves, and hang eave troughs, etc. He also owned a farm south-east of Irene where there was a wooded lot for firewood. The store was heated by a furnace in the basement directly under a large, round register in the floor. In the winter the town's retired gentlemen would sit on chairs around the register and swap stories, and when Ray or uncle Tom would turn their backs, they would spit down the register on top of the furnace, which would result in a not too pleasant an odor. Our Historical Society has two pictures of the inside of the hardware store (1910 & 1950). The biggest difference in the two pictures is the age of the men at the counter."

Your newsletter reporter, Beverly (Oberg) Scholz