

CHERRY VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER
Summer 2019



“To say it was a beautiful day would not begin to explain it. It was that day when the end of summer intersects perfectly with the start of fall.” – *Ann Patchett*



The following have passed away since our last newsletter:

Pearl Robbins	95	May 2019
Joan Eifer	78	May 2019
Chuck Gable	86	July 2019



The Last Rites of the Day by Pearl Robbins

Each child tucked into clean white sheets,
In fresh sleeping garments that smell so sweet.
Prayers have been spoken.
Forgiven for promises broken.

The stars are crisp in the blackness of night.
So glorious to behold their heavenly height.
The shadows below so softly blend.
With the darkness of night, my friend.

It is still.
The noise of the day has drifted away.
On the wings of a fairy called night.
The babies are sleeping.
They've stopped laughing and weeping.

They're in the arms of the fairy called night.
The fire is dying.
The moon is rising.
Now the fairy of night is in full flight.

Peace to the man who has worked a full day.
Not a moment of time he has wasted.
Peace to the mother.





Mary Lou (Gundhus-Millar) with her parents Benjamin and Nellie Scott

Ben Scott was born in Virginia in 1884. Nellie Scott was born four years later in 1888. Nellie grew up on a farm near Pecatonica. Ben worked at Fisher Body Plant 21. in Detroit, but later moved to Rockford, Illinois and stayed with his older sister and her family. On the Inter Urban Train, Ben would often get off at Pecatonica just fifteen miles away from Rockford to visit his older brother, Walter, who worked on Wilson farm. It was sometime during his frequent trips to Pecatonica that he met Nellie Wilson who lived on the Wilson farm.

Ben and Nellie married and moved to Rockford. They welcomed a daughter, Mary Lou, into the world in 1929 and moved to Cherry Valley in 1932 when she was three years old. They rented a duplex on Genoa Road from a Mrs. Haley. During the depression the other unit was not rented, so the landlord let them move to the warmer side in the winter, and back to the cooler side in the summer. When Mary Lou was eight they bought a house diagonally across the street from the duplex, complete with a barn and a full acre of space. Ben built a large bell attached to the front of the house just below the roof.

Ben lived in Cherry Valley but commuted to Rockford as a carpenter working on several large homes. They later moved to Rockford when Mary Lou was nineteen. Nellie worked as a seamstress for D. J. Steward in the alteration department before moving to Cherry Valley where she continued sewing for residents. Nellie also dabbled in furniture making, including a powder table and matching seat. Ben acted as a volunteer fireman during their time in Cherry Valley, from 1932-1948. Both Ben and Nellie were active volunteers in the Cherry Valley Methodist Church as well as the PTA for Cherry Valley School which taught every age from Kindergarten to second year of high school.

After moving to Rockford in 1948, Ben and Nellie often visited Cherry Valley, mostly to visit friends and members of their Church.

In 1960 we moved to Long Beach, CA, Ben and Nellie would come out during the winter months to live in apartments in Long Beach, then return to Rockford. In the mid 60's they bought a house next to ours and stayed here year round. Both Ben and Nellie passed away in 1972.

John adds....thanks to my daughter Kristi who is a literature major. She took the notes I jotted down when talking to my Mom and put together the above write-up.

Mary Lou and her son, John Gundhus, also shared a 15 page history of Cherry Valley compiled by her 7th grade class in October of 1941. It is really well written and researched, and is complete with a map drawn by Mary Lou showing the location of the dog park, the public green, and the Chicago & N.W. Railroad line, among other things. You can read it at the CVHS.



Early Childhood Stories

At one time the quarry on Mill Road had water in it, and was connected to the mill race by a channel across and under Mill Road. When a break would occur in the dam of the mill race, repairs would be floated on a large scow propelled by poles up the race to the break.

When the bridge would wash out back in the early 1810's the children on the west side of the river had to walk the railroad bridge to get to school. This was a covered bridge that was replaced by the present iron bridge around 1890. Told to John Larson by Nellie Brown

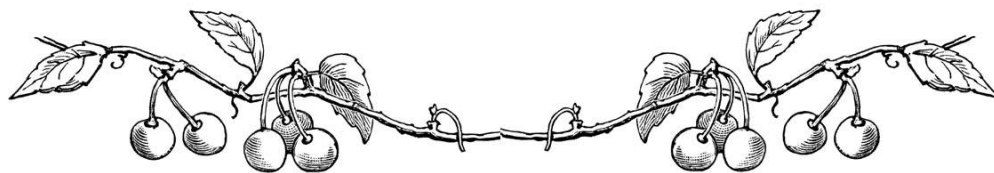
Back when broom corn was an important crop around Cherry Valley there was a field east of the Valley that was said to be a mile long. It would take the laborers half a day to hoe from one end of the field to the other. They would eat their lunch and spend the rest of the day hoeing back. The grown-ups were paid \$1.00 a day, and the kids \$.50 Told to John Larson by Tim Kehoe



Occasionally we are contacted by people looking for information on their home's history. You can research this by going to the Winnebago Co. Records Office, 404 Elm Street, Rooms 4 & 5.

We have an additional 5 copies of Our Memories Are Warm for sale. Printing costs rose significantly since the last copies were made, and the new books will need to sell for \$60. Well worth it...they are a wonderful history of the Valley. And thanks to the village for installing the old school flagpole in front of our building.

Our meetings are held on the first Sunday of the month at 3:30. If that falls on a holiday weekend, then we will postpone until the following Sunday. Anyone is welcome to attend. And please note we have a new email address posted below. The date 1899 is how old our wonderful building is! We would love for you to share photos, stories or ideas for the newsletter there!



Editor.... Pam Jeske (golfnsew@aol.com) 815-621-7262

Please feel free to drop a line, add some content, share some stories either to my e-mail,

The Historical Society's e-mail (cvhs.1899@gmail.com)

Or stop by, leave a note ...have a chat with a member!

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Thank you to the Cherry Valley Village Hall for their wonderful support and assistance.
Please let our sponsors know you saw their advertisement in the newsletter, we appreciate them!



Terry Murphy, a lifelong Cherry Valley resident had always envisioned organizing a non for profit organization with a group of Cherry Valley area men with the goal of helping Cherry Valley area children and the community in general. In 2011 he put his ideas into action and the Cherry Valley Area Men's Association was established. Sadly Terry passed away in 2017 but his vision and goals are the driving force of our organization. We are a small organization that raises money through various events, company sponsors and membership dues. We donate to various community needs and offer five \$500 scholarships per year towards continuing education.

Cherry Valley Area Men's Association is a Nonprofit 501 (C)(3) organization Fed ID # 90-0674903

Events Cherry Valley Area Men's Association has sponsored or contributed to:

1. Petitioned and got the speed limit reduced from 55 mph to 45 mph on Harrison (Bypass 20) and Mill Road intersection.
2. Established an educational scholarship program donating five \$500 scholarships every year.
3. Donated uniforms and equipment for the 4th and 5th grade boys and girls basketball teams at Cherry Valley School
4. Donated cheerleading uniforms for the 4th and 5th grade Cherry Valley School Spirit squad.
5. CVAMA members assist with the yearly food and paper shredding drive at Village Hall.
6. Raised funds for uniforms for the Goldie B. Floberg special athletes.
7. CVAMA worked with the Winnebago County Forest Preserve to design, produce and install rules of the river signs at six county forest preserves.
8. Donated to the 2011 and 2012 downtown Cherry Valley Christmas lights
9. Donated and passed out over 4,000 Frisbees at the Cherry Valley 4th of July parade 2012 thru 2018.
10. Sponsored the Oscar Meyer Weiner Mobile at the 2012 4th of July parade.
11. Sponsor the Cherry Valley Family Night Ice skating at Carlson Ice Arena 2016-2018
12. Sponsored Cherry Valley 4th and 5th grade basketball players to youth basketball clinics.
13. Mini Golf and silent auction sponsor 2017, 2018 Cherry Valley Public Library fundraiser.
14. Sponsored Wild Life Exhibit and Educational Show Cherry Valley Public Library 2017
15. Donated a defibrillator to the Cherry Valley Police Department.
16. Sponsor the Cherry Valley Bounce Night at the Gymnastics Academy South for 2017 and 2018.
17. Contributed fishing poles and tackle boxes to the Cherry Valley Library that can be used with a library card.
18. Sponsor the Cherry Valley Library tour at the Burpee Museum 2018
19. Sponsor Cherry Valley Library Furry and Friends Petting Zoo 2018